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ESSAYS OF ADDISON



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# ESSAYS OF JOSEPH ADDISON

CHOSEN AND EDITED  
WITH A PREFACE AND A FEW NOTES

BY

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FELLOW OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE  
AND OF THE MIDDLE TEMPLE, BARRISTER-AT-LAW

IN TWO VOLUMES

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## PREFACE

HAVING undertaken to edit these essays, in which Sir Roger de Coverley plays a leading part, I naturally formed a wish to visit the old knight's pleasant seat in Worcestershire, where the Spectator passed the month of July with him in rural retirement more than two hundred years ago. I was the more desirous of doing so, because my researches into the history of the Spectator Club had led me to believe, that on the dissolution of the club many of the papers relating to it had been sent for safe-keeping to Captain Sentry, Sir Roger's heir, and that some of them at least were still preserved in the muniment room at Coverley Hall. Accordingly I wrote to inquire of the present owner of the Hall, and received from him a very courteous letter in reply. He informed me that he had in his possession a considerable number of papers concerning the club, that he had never himself examined them with attention, but that I should be free to do so, and to publish anything of interest I might find in them, if I would pay him a visit and examine the documents on the spot, as he valued them too highly to trust them to the hazards of the post. He only stipulated, that I should not make his name public, nor drop any hint as to the part of Worcestershire in which Coverley is situated; for he leads, as he told me, a very retired life on his ancestral estate, and he fears that, were the Hall better known, the fame

of Sir Roger might attract many visitors, whom he could not admit without inconvenience, nor refuse admittance without discourtesy.<sup>1</sup> Needless to say I gladly accepted his kind invitation and willingly gave the required pledge of secrecy. My wish was to visit the old Hall in summer, that I might see it as the Spectator himself saw it in those bright July days of 1711; but legal business (for like a well-known member of the Spectator Club I am a Templar) detained me in town last year all through the summer, and it was not until late in the autumn that I was able to go down into Worcestershire. Yet the delay had its compensation, for the autumn was one of unusual beauty. Never, perhaps, within the memory of men now living did summer fade so slowly and, as it were, so reluctantly through such exquisite gradations of mellow sunshine and glorious colouring into the greyness and sadness of winter. In that gorgeous sunset of the year I journeyed down to Worcestershire. After being long immured in the smoke and grime of London, it was a pure joy to me to drink in the green landscape, with its fields and meadows, its winding rivers fringed by pale willows, its old manors embosomed in trees, its peaceful villages nestling round the

<sup>1</sup> Well-informed readers need hardly be reminded that the name of Coverley village and Hall was changed in the later years of the eighteenth century, and no longer appears on modern maps. An old map of Arrowsmith's is, I believe, the last which marks the place under the name of Cuverly (*sic*). The circumstances under which the change of name took place were remarkable and peculiar. They are fully related in the *Annual Register*, and more concisely in an excellent article in *The Dictionary of National Biography*, to which, for obvious reasons, I am precluded from referring more particularly. Some trifling errors of detail crept into the original article, but these, I am glad to observe, have been corrected in the second edition of the *Dictionary*.

churches with their grey, time-worn spires or ivied towers, as they floated silently, like a dream of heaven, past the window at which I sat. Over all rested, like a benediction, the blue sky flecked with white clouds of a lovely October day.

But mindful of my promise I will say no more of my journey, and will give no clue that could lead to the identification of the Hall. I will only say, that I have visited all Sir Roger's old haunts and seen them with my own eyes. I have walked at sunset in the long avenue of elms and heard the rooks cawing overhead, and at a later hour I have watched from the same spot the moon rising behind the ivy-clad ruins of the abbey and silvering the whole scene with her gentle beams. I have sat in Sir Roger's pew in the old village church—a square high-backed pew of black oak just under the pulpit—and have inspected the monuments of the Coverley family, which break the severe simplicity of the walls, from the uncouth effigy of the Crusader with his upturned face, clasped sword, and crossed legs, down to the marble tablets of generals and admirals, of deans and prebends, in the reigns of Charles II. and James II. I have paced the long gallery where the family portraits hang. They hang just as the Spectator describes them, but naturally not a few have been added since his time; for though the name of Coverley became extinct with Sir Roger, the family has continued unbroken to this day, and, without rising to posts of the highest distinction, has served its king and country in peace and war, on sea and land, with credit to itself and advantage to the public. Even among the portraits which the Spectator must have seen, I noted not a few worthy of remark, which he passed over in silence. For instance, there is a portrait by Vandyke of a dark handsome man in a shining cuirass and great plumed

that, which throws half his face into deep shadow. He bore the king's commission and fell at the battle of Naseby. Another of the family in the same century rose to be Admiral of the White under the sailor king, James the Second. There is a portrait of him in his admiral's dress by Kneller. The face is rubicund, bronzed and weather-beaten; his right hand rests on the hilt of his sword, the left sleeve is empty and pinned to his breast, which is covered with orders. The tradition at Coverley is, that he lost his arm at the battle of La Hogue, his ship being one of those that pressed hardest on the French flagship, the *Royal Sun*, when that gallant ship, alone and surrounded by enemies, fell sullenly back, the fleur-de-lys still flaunting proudly at the mast-head, all her portholes sputtering fire, and all her scuppers spouting blood, till she was lost to her pursuers in the darkness. Next to the portrait of the admiral hangs the picture of a grave divine in cassock and flowing wig, seated in a pensive attitude with a great book open before him, and the spire of Coverley church appearing over very green trees and under a very blue sky in the background. He was a younger son, and held the family living of Coverley for many years. They say he was a learned man, a Fellow of his college at one of the Universities (I forget which), and very deep in Hebrew and the mathematics. In later life he devoted much of his ample leisure—for the parish duties of Coverley in those days were not very onerous—to calculating the number of the Beast in Revelations; he even meditated a treatise on the subject, which no doubt would have done him great honour, had he lived to publish it, but unfortunately he died before he had completed his calculations. Among these grave and gallant men there are portraits of fair ladies. I noticed one in particular of a blooming maid-of-honour, who danced with Charles the Second at the first ball which

the Merry Monarch gave it Whitehall after his restoration.

But of all the portraits in the gallery, the gem, in my eyes, is that of dear Sir Roger himself. I came on it suddenly, and without a hint of whom it represented. For I had asked of the kind owner of the Hall, that I might walk by myself for a little in the long gallery and give myself up, without interruption, to the meditations which the place was fitted to evoke. I was pacing up and down in a fit of musing. It was near sunset, and the light was failing; but suddenly the departing luminary broke through a bank of clouds in the west, and his long level beams, shooting through a lofty oriel, fell full on a portrait which at once riveted my attention. I could not mistake it. The tall, slender, graceful figure—the features of almost feminine delicacy—the frank, honest blue eyes—the pleasant smile—the air of old-world courtesy—all tinged, and, as it were, fused into tenderness by something child-like and appealing, almost pathetic,—it was Sir Roger himself. He is dressed in hunting costume, with his dogs about him and a rather florid landscape in the background. The portrait is youthful; there is a doubt whether it is by Lely or Kneller. I am no great judge of pictures, but it seemed to me to be in the best manner of Lely.

I have slept in the haunted chamber which was shut up when Sir Roger took possession of the Hall, and which he caused to be exorcized by his chaplain. To judge by my experience, the exorcism was effectual; for though I lay long awake, I saw nothing more ghostly than the dance of shadows cast by the firelight on the ceiling (the evening being damp and chilly they had lighted a bright fire on the hearth), and heard nothing more blood-curdling than the tick of a death-watch behind the black wainscot; the

croaking of frogs in the lily-like pond under my window, and the hooting of owls in the elms. With these sounds in my ears I fell fast asleep, and slept as sweetly as ever I did in my life, till a sunbeam stealing through a chink in the shutters woke me, and I sat up wondering where I was.

Before I quit the Hall I will only add, that sitting in the great oriel, where the arms of the Coverleys are blazoned on the panes, I chanced to take up an old volume that was lying on the window seat. What was my joy to find it to be Baker's *Chronicle*, the very copy that Sir Roger was wont to peruse, sitting in his high armchair by the great fireplace of the hall after a hard day's hunting! I almost thought I could recognize the old knight's thumb-marks on some of the yellow dog-eared leaves. I fancy he must have nodded over some of these same pages and wakened with a start, when the ponderous volume fell with a crash to the floor.

Then, too, I have seen the cottage of Moll White, the witch. Her memory survives in the village, and anybody can point out her former abode. It is one of a row of whitewashed cottages, with high thatched roofs, which overlook the common, a long straggling green bounded by tall elms and enclosing in its midst a pool, where children paddle, ducks swim, and, on hot summer days the cows stand in the water with the flies buzzing about their heads. Beyond and above the elms, at the far end of the common, appears a line of low hills, which, when I saw them, showed blue and faint through the gathering mists of an autumn evening. Moll's cottage is well kept, and except for a tabby cat, which sat purring on the doorstep and rubbed itself affectionately against my legs, there was nothing about it to suggest that it had ever been the home of a witch. There were pots of flowers in the windows, creepers growing over the

porch, and a linnet singing merrily in a cage above the door.<sup>1</sup>

The last of the scenes associated with Sir Roger which I visited in the neighbourhood was the Saracen's Head. It is a little wayside inn standing on the brow of a hill, where the road dips down rather steeply into a valley. Before turning to examine the famous signboard I stood for a moment to contemplate the prospect from the height; for the sun was setting behind the line of blue hills I have spoken of, and his last rays spread a soft radiant glory over the woods in the valley, some of them already stripped and bare, others still wrapt in a gorgeous pall of autumnal red and gold. Through their gaps I could catch glimpses of a winding river, its surface here darkened by the evening shadows, there gleaming like fire with reflections of the celestial glory. The signboard dangles from an iron stanchion above the door of the inn. The head of the Saracen, which had lately received a fresh

<sup>1</sup> I have described as I saw it what is certainly now shown as Moll White's cottage. But in my capacity of editor I am bound to point out that neither the style nor the situation of the cottage answers well to the Spectator's description of it as a "hovel, which stood in a solitary corner under the side of the wood." Perhaps the cottage has been rebuilt and improved since Moll's day, and others may have grown up about it. Or can it be that the identification is an arbitrary one, devised perhaps by some ingenious owner of the cottage for the sake of turning a dishonest penny? Now that I think of it, I did slip a silver coin into the hand of the smiling old dame who let me peep in at her kitchen, and I daresay others have done so before me. I am sorry to cast any doubt on the accuracy of a picturesque tradition, and nothing but a strict regard for truth could induce me to do so. But throughout these my researches it has been my constant aim to weigh every statement, and to set down none for which there is not either conclusive evidence or at all events a high degree of probability. I could never consent, like some historians, to embellish a plain narrative of facts with a varnish of fiction, or to tickle the imagination of my readers at the expense of their understanding.



coat of paint, is certainly very ferocious, but under the long moustachios and whiskers I fancied I could still trace a faint, a ridiculous resemblance to the kindly features of Sir Roger.

That was the end of my visit to Coverley. Next day I returned to London and resumed my usual duties. I have seldom enjoyed anything so much as this excursion into Worcestershire, and I shall always treasure the memory of it. Curiously enough, though it happened so lately, there is something far away about it in my mind, as if it had taken place many years instead of only a few months ago. Indeed, writing as I now do in the heart of London, with the rumble of its ceaseless traffic in my ears, the thought of the quiet old hall, the tall elms, the cawing rooks, the village church, and the cottages on the green in the evening twilight, comes back on me like a beautiful dream rather than the recollection of a waking reality.

Along with the papers relating to the Spectator Club, which are preserved at Coverley Hall, there is a small but interesting collection of relics. Among them I noted in particular Sir Roger's walking-stick and favourite arm-chair; the sword which Captain Sentry used at the battle of Steenkirk, and which he wore when he escorted Sir Roger to the theatre; also a hat, with two bullet-holes through the crown, which is traditionally said (for I could find no written record on the subject) to have been worn by the captain on the same hard-fought day in Flanders, when he charged with his regiment on a French battery. Then there is a collection of pipes smoked by members of the club, together with a number of tobacco-stoppers, some of which are supposed (though again I could find no good evidence in support of the tradition) to have been made by Will Wimble. But perhaps the most interesting relic of all is the original letter in which Sir Roger's butler









announced his old master's death to the *Spectator*. The paper is somewhat yellow and the ink faded with time, but the handwriting is still perfectly legible, except in a few places where it has been accidentally blurred, perhaps by the tears of the writer, or by those which Sir Andrew Freeport shed when he read the letter aloud to the club. In my quality of editor I thought it my duty to collate the letter carefully with the copy of it published in the *Spectator*, and I can vouch for the accuracy of the copy, except for a few trivial points of spelling and punctuation, which I have not thought it worth while to set right. The only other relic I need mention is a phial, containing a dingy-looking liquid and labelled "The Widow Trueby's Water." I had the curiosity to taste this celebrated specific for the gravel, but over the results of the experiment I prefer to draw a veil.

The papers relating to the *Spectator* Club, which I found at Coverley, consist for the most part simply of the minutes of the meetings. These seem to have been regularly kept, and though there are several gaps in them, notably in the summer of 1711, when the *Spectator* himself was absent in Worcestershire, it might almost be possible to construct from them a continuous history of the club. I shall not attempt anything so ambitious; indeed the shortness of my stay at Coverley forbade me to collect materials sufficient for such an undertaking. But besides the minutes I was fortunate enough to discover several papers of notes and jottings, some of which have actually been worked up into finished essays in the *Spectator*. Others apparently refer to essays which were planned but never completed; and amongst these there is one which I have thought it worth while to publish, not for the sake of the literary merit of the piece, which is insignificant, but because it sheds new light on the private life of a prominent

member of the club, Mr. William Honeycomb. The paper appears to be a rough unfinished sketch for a paper in the *Spectator*; but it is impossible to speak with confidence on the subject, as the manuscript begins and ends abruptly and bears neither date nor signature. The handwriting is certainly not Addison's, and the style is quite unlike his, being entirely destitute of those literary graces and delicate strokes of humour which enliven the productions of that elegant writer. It is rather in the manner of Budgell at his best or of Steele at his worst. The only value of the piece, so far as it has any, is a certain plain straightforward way of telling the facts, which carries the impress of truth and verisimilitude on the face of it to every unprejudiced mind. I venture to believe, that readers who are interested in the history of the club will be willing to overlook the baldness of the style for the sake of the genuine biographical interest of the matter. The many friends of the club have always mourned the sad fate of Mr. William Honeycomb, who was cut off by an untimely marriage, while he was still in the full bloom of a very prolonged youth. The paper which I have been so happy as to unearth, sheds perhaps a glimmer of light on his mysterious disappearance from that fashionable world of which he was so long a shining ornament. At all events, it illustrates the last phase of his life, when he had bidden farewell to the gaieties of the metropolis and devoted himself, in the seclusion of the country, to the cultivation of cabbages and the domestic virtues. It is my intention hereafter to publish the piece in facsimile with a full apparatus of conjectural emendations, or corruptions, as the case may be, and a commentary in which I will explain everything that is perfectly obvious and will leave all that is dark in a decent obscurity. In this way I do not doubt but that I

shall win for myself a place among the foremost scholars of the age, and be hailed as a prodigy of learning, a sort of second Scaliger or Bentley, a new light just risen above the literary horizon of Europe. But as I foresee, that some time must elapse before I can fulfil these astronomical predictions by completing what a learned lady once called my *opus magnus*, I am resolved not to keep the public trembling on the tiptoe of suspense, but to oblige them by publishing the manuscript at once, just as it came into my hands, unadorned by any of those brilliant conjectural emendations on which I build all my hopes of posthumous renown. I have merely reduced the somewhat eccentric orthography of the essay to our modern standard, and relieved it of the superfluity of capitals and italics (indicated by underscoring in the manuscript), which, however they may have been deemed ornamental in the days of Queen Anne, are rejected by the taste of the more polite age in which it is our happiness to live under good King George the Fifth. Without further preface or apology I subjoin a copy of the manuscript :

\* But the club was fast breaking up. The death of Sir Roger de Coverley was soon followed by another disaster of almost equal magnitude, the marriage of Will Honeycomb. It is sad to think that the glass of fashion, the gay dog, the agreeable rattle, the faded beau, the battered rake, who had been eight and forty any time these twelve years past, should retire from the scene of his triumphs a blushing bridegroom, arm in arm with a blowzy milkmaid, while the bells of the village church rang a joyous peal. The circumstances attending this melancholy affair have never been fully cleared up ; indeed we know nothing about them except the little we can glean from Will's own account, which is naturally coloured in rosy tints and flavoured with some rather faint reminiscences of



loye's young dream. But for my part I cannot help suspecting that a horsewhip, brandished by a stout bucolic arm, had some share in leading Mr. Honeycomb like a lamb to the altar. Be that as it may, we leave poor Will in the country, dejectedly strolling about his paternal acres and contemplating his turnip-fields with lack-lustre eyes, while his mind wanders far away to the Mall, and St. James's Park, and Covent Garden, and he thinks with a sigh of the happy days when he strutted and swaggered about these haunts of fashion, his sword at his side and his hat cocked at the most rakish angle, ogling the frail beauties, glaring defiance at the men, and bowing to the greatest toasts in their coaches, whether he had ever seen them before, or not. And those early winter mornings, too, when all sober people were abed, and the sky was just beginning to purple behind the tall gables of the houses, how he used to lurk with other young bloods in an alley and hear the distant watchman droning out the hour, and then, peeping round the corner, to see him coming down the dark street with his lantern, to bounce out, knock him down, and hold his head, spluttering and swearing, under the refreshing water of the matutinal pump! And then that fat pursy cit in Cheapside, how he skipped and capered when they formed a ring round him and pinked him behind with their toasting-forks! To see him spinning round and round like a teetotum, and to hear him squealing like a stuck pig! Ha! ha! ha! ha! The tears ran down the old beau's withered cheeks at the thought of it. Ah! that was something like life, different from those damned turnip-tops! He kicked viciously at a stone in the path, and having squirmed it away among the turnips, he felt a little relieved, and resumed his agreeable meditations.

“ But the smile that had begun to dawn on his face

died out, and a shadow crossed his brow, as he thought of that other early winter morning in the fields behind Montague House—how dark it was and how cold!—he shivered yet at the memory of it—and the flaring torches—and the measured ground—and the flash of swords—and that limp figure borne away by staggering men through the darkness—— No, no, it was better not to think of it. But how delightful it was in winter evenings, when the candles were lit in the theatre, and the music struck up, and the curtain was about to rise on Mrs. Bracegirdle or Signor Nicolini and the lion! How pleasant, too, on summer evenings to be rowed up the Thames to Spring Garden, with the plash of oars and the ripple of the current at the bow, while snatches of song and the sound of merry voices came wafted across the water, and the whole broad bosom of the river glowed and shimmered in the warm rays of the setting sun! And then, when the last quavers of the singers in the garden had died away, and the lamps were out, and the walks deserted, to drop down the river in the moonshine, to see the lights of London twinkling through the gloom on either bank, and the great Abbey towers standing out black against the lingering glow in the western sky!

“The very sight and sound of the streets, with the throng of foot-passengers, the stream of coaches, and the forest of gaudy signboards shining in the sun and creaking in the wind—it warmed the cockles of his heart to think of them all. And how cheerful in the afternoons to lounge in at Will’s or Button’s and discuss the latest news of the court or the war over a pot of steaming coffee with that arch-Whig, Dicky Steele, or that solemn prig, Joey Addison, who knew a good glass of wine, by Gad, and could take off his bottle like a man for all his smug pragmatism. And then, just as they were

growing warm over the doings in Flanders and the cursed delays of the Allies, to be suddenly called to the door by the excited coffee-man shouting, 'Here he comes! Here he comes!' And to rush to the door and to see the Queen's messenger from Dover, spent with hard riding and all bespattered with mud, spurring through the streets to St. James's, with the people running after him to get the first news! And to stand in the crowd outside the palace while they read the despatches—and to see the window flung open and the placard hung out:

#### ANOTHER GREAT VICTORY IN THE LOW COUNTRIES

and then the huzzas and the hats up in the air, and the three-times three and one cheer more, and the bonfires, and the illuminations, and the Tower guns booming out over all, and—— But from these dreams of vanished bliss the old beau was suddenly recalled to the stern realities of life by a shrill voice calling out, 'William! William!' It was Mrs. Honeycomb."

Here the manuscript breaks off abruptly. It is obviously unfinished, for the writer must certainly have meant to tell us what Mrs. Honeycomb had to say to Mr. Honeycomb, together with the outburst of profanity, or rather of tenderness, with which the fond husband met this touching appeal from the wife of his bosom. Perhaps a further search among the papers of the club may yet enable me to supply the lacuna. Meantime I will only add a few words about another small discovery of a different kind, which I was so fortunate as to make in the course of my laborious researches. It appears highly probable, if not quite certain, that during the period when he was publishing his celebrated papers the Spectator occupied chambers in Staple's Inn. So far as I am aware

—I write subject to correction—no one in modern years had even guessed at this. The way in which I came to ascertain it, was what, humanly speaking, you might call an accident.

It was one of the hottest afternoons of July in the very hot summer three years ago. I had been stifled with the heat and stunned with the noise of the streets, and had stepped into St. James's Park in search of a little coolness and shade. After strolling about under the trees and admiring the gay flower-beds, then in the full pomp of their midsummer beauty, I sat down on a chair in the shade, and amused myself by watching the swans, with their arched necks, ruffled plumage, and swelling breasts, as they slowly sailed among the water-lilies. The heat made me drowsy, and perhaps I closed my eyes for a minute or two, I cannot say, but certainly when I looked about me again, the park seemed unusually still and deserted for a summer afternoon. Not a living soul was in sight. Just then I heard a sound of voices and laughter approaching, and looking in the direction from which it proceeded I saw coming along the path toward me two figures which at once attracted and riveted my attention. At first I thought they must be maskers, so rich and varied were the colours of their costume, and so quaint its cut. They wore knee-breeches and shoes with shining buckles; under their broad cocked hats long curled wigs hung down to their shoulders, and they had swords at their sides. One of them was an old man, tall and slender, who carried himself with a certain courtly grace as he turned and stooped slightly towards his companion in lively conversation. He wore a suit of dark purple velvet with gold buttons. The other, a shorter, stouter man, was clad in a suit of bright cherry-colour silk with a profusion of galloons, lace, ribbons, and frills; and as he raised his hand, with a

silver snuff-box in it, the sunbeams struck sparkles of fire from the jewelled rings on his fingers. He strutted with so jaunty an air that at first I took him for a young man ; but as he drew near, I could see crow's-felt about his eyes, and I fancied I could detect wrinkles under what looked like rouge on his cheeks. They came on, laughing and talking, now in sunshine and now in shadow, till they were close up to me. Instinctively, as they passed, I stood up and raised my hat. The old gentleman, who was next me on the path, turned towards me with a pleasant smile, and as he pulled off his hat with an air of old-fashioned politeness, the sun shone full on his face, and I knew at once that it was Sir Roger de Coverley. I guessed that his companion was Will Honeycomb, and my curiosity being aroused I followed them at a little distance. They seemed to be concerting a scheme for surprising somebody, which afforded them amusement ; for I heard Sir Roger say, as he pulled his watch out of his fob, " Just three o'clock. We are sure to catch him at it, if we go at once." " To be sure," replied Will Honeycomb, " he always speculates at this hour. He'll addle his brains over those cursed books. It's a Christian duty to go and rout him from them." " Well," said Sir Roger, " we'll call a coach in the Mall and go straight to him." ;

By this time they were come to the gate of the park, and Sir Roger hailed a hackney coach and gave the coachman a direction, which I could not hear ; for he was a little way off and had his back to me. I called another coach, and bade the coachman follow the other two gentlemen closely. " The gentleman in violet and the one in rose ? " he asked. I nodded, and away we drove, jolting and rattling over the paving-stones. It never struck me before, how very badly the streets of London were laid. The cobbles were such, that at every jolt I thought all

the bones of my body would come out of joint. And the streets had a strange and novel appearance. Like the parlour they were unusually quiet, and the few passengers I saw were dressed so oddly, the women in great hooped petticoats and bright hoods, with black patches on their faces, and the men in cocked hats, bag-wigs, knee-breeches, and coats of all the colours in the rainbow, with long rapiers dangling at their sides. Then I was surprised at the number of old black-timbered houses, which somehow I had never noticed before, though they stood out boldly enough with their tall gables projecting over the street, their wooden galleries, their casement windows with little diamond-shaped panes of glass, and their gay signboards flaunting in the sun.

I was still wondering at it all when the coach suddenly drew up, and putting my head out of the window I saw that we were in Holborn, just opposite to Staple's Inn. Sir Roger and Will Honeycomb were already on the pavement. They had dismissed their coach and were turning into the Inn. I dismissed my coach also and followed. They passed under the archway with its massive doors, and entered a little cobbled court shaded by tall plane trees. There they sat down on a bench under a tree, seemingly to concert their plans for the intended surprise. I hung back in the shadow of the archway, where I could watch them without being observed. As they sat there chatting in the dappled shade, a fountain plashed hard by with a drowsy murmur, doves were cooing and fluttering, and on the far side of the court, under the thick foliage of the planes, I could see the hall, its black old walls half mantled in vines and creepers, the sunlight shining softly through the crimson and blue and purple panes of its great oriel.

They were not long of coming to a decision, for Sir Roger soon rose briskly from the bench and led the way across the

court to a vaulted passage beside the hall. I followed them, still unnoticed, and passing under the vault emerged on a second court with a small garden, a stretch of greensward, and gay flower-beds, all sleeping peacefully in the heat of the summer afternoon. A flight of stone steps, just opposite us, led up to a terrace overlooking the garden, but instead of ascending them Sir Roger turned sharply to the left, and entering a low doorway, mounted a steep wooden staircase with a heavy balustrade of black oak. He led the way on tiptoe, looking back now and then with a smile and a finger on his lip, as if to enjoin silence on his companion. Mr. Honeycomb was by no means so careful, for he coughed and hemmed distinctly twice or thrice, and his sword clattered on the treads of the steps. I noticed, too, that the jaunty air with which he walked on the flat quite deserted him in climbing the staircase; he puffed and wheezed, and, if I am not mistaken, I heard him swear at "those damned steps" under his breath.

On the first landing there were several doors, all of them, like the balustrade, made of massive black oak. Sir Roger turned to the right, and tapped lightly at one of them. A voice from within answered, in what seemed a peevish tone, "Come in!" so he pushed the door open and entered, followed by Will Honeycomb. Then I heard him say in his high quavering voice, "Still speculating, my dear philosopher? We've come to carry you off to Squire's to drink a dish of coffee with us." "Come along, old cock," I could hear Will Honeycomb adding in his gruffer voice, "the Dutch mail is just come in, and they say there's great news from Flanders. You haven't finished the paper for to-morrow, you say? Curse it, give it to Dicky to finish; he'll scribble it off fast enough, I warrant you. Come along." They had left the door ajar behind them,

so I peeped in and got a clear view of the apartment without being perceived, for they all had their backs to me. It was a low but fairly spacious room, wainscoted with some dark wood, perhaps walnut. On the far side was a huge fire-place with a great mantelpiece of carved stone over it. To the left a single window, in a deep embrasure, let in a stream of dusty sunshine, which fell on a writing-table drawn up close to the window. At the table was seated a man plainly dressed in drab with his back to me. He had been writing, for he had just pushed a sheet of paper from him, and I could see that the ink on it was still wet. Sir Roger was standing behind him, with one hand lightly laid on the writer's shoulder, looking down at him and smiling. The writer had turned half round toward his interlocutors, and from the expression of his face, and the way in which he drummed on the table with his fingers, I judged that he was somewhat impatient of the interruption. At last, as if about to remonstrate with the intruders, he turned full round on them, and, by the broad face, the snub nose, the square jowls, and the settled gravity of his countenance I knew that he could be no other than the Spectator. I was so overjoyed at having tracked him to his den at last, and found him in the very heat of composition, that I could restrain myself no longer, but tapped on the door to announce my presence and introduce myself to their society. But they seemed not to hear me, for they continued their conversation, or, to speak more correctly, Sir Roger and Will Honeycomb continued to talk, while the Spectator sat silent with an air of rather sullen resignation. So I rapped louder, but still they paid no heed. And now the room began to grow dim, and their figures to fade, and their voices to sound very far off. I rubbed my eyes to clear my vision, and when I opened them I found myself again on the chair



in St. James's Park." The swans were still swimming lazily among the water-lilies, but the sun was lower in the sky, and the shadows of the trees fell longer across the grass. The park-keeper was tapping me on the shoulder and saying, "A penny for the chair, if you please. You have had a long nap, sir."

I started up, and having paid my penny quitted the park and hurried back to Staple's Inn. The streets, as I passed through them, had resumed the usual aspect of bustle and tumult, which they present on a July afternoon towards the end of the London season. I could see none of the quaint black-timbered houses which had figured so prominently on my recent ride through the city; the excruciating cobbles had disappeared, and the tide of traffic rolled smoothly over the asphalt pavement. I began to think that I must have been dreaming, and that I should find Staple's Inn to have vanished like the rest of my vision. But on that point I was soon reassured. For there it was in its old place, just as I had seen it, with its ancient timbered gables overlooking the hurry, and seemingly deaf to the uproar of Holborn. I again passed under the archway and entered the first court. Yes, there was the very bench under the plane which had been so lately occupied by Sir Roger and Will Honeycomb. There, across the court, was still the old hall with its vines and creepers, and the sunlight streaming through the painted glass of its windows. Again I passed through the vaulted passage beside the hall, and again I found myself in the garden court, with its grass and flower-beds, its terrace and stone steps, all sleeping as before in the drowsy heat of the summer afternoon. But the staircase with the balustrade of black oak was gone, and though I searched for it carefully then and since, I have never been able to find it from that day to this.

Yet I know it must be there, for I saw it, and I shall find it one day, and see Sir Roger again, and Will Honeycomb, and the Spectator there—there or somewhere in the land of dreams.

J. G. FRAZER.

1 BRICK COURT, TEMPLE,

*August 10, 1914.*



# CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE . . . . .	V
THE VISION OF FAME . . . . .	I
THE CHOICE OF HERCULES . . . . .	II
THE VISION OF JUSTICE . . . . .	17
LITERARY PIRATES . . . . .	24
THE VISION OF JUSTICE ( <i>concluded</i> ) . . . . .	29
THE HOOPED PETTICOAT . . . . .	36
THE WONDERS OF THE MICROCOSM . . . . .	42
THE VISION OF LOVE . . . . .	47
THE WINE-BREWERS . . . . .	54
THE ELOQUENCE OF SILENCE <sup>L</sup> . . . . .	60
THE NEWSMONGER . . . . .	65
THE PEDANT . . . . .	70
THE POETASTER . . . . .	75
THE CRITIC . . . . .	80
THE TULIP-GROWER . . . . .	85
THE ECCLESIASTICAL THERMOMETER . . . . .	90
THE ADVENTURES OF A SHILLING . . . . .	95
THE COURT OF HONOUR . . . . .	101
JOURNAL OF THE COURT OF HONOUR . . . . .	105
FROZEN SPEECH . . . . .	110
JOURNAL OF THE COURT OF HONOUR . . . . .	116
RELIGIONS IN WAXWORK . . . . .	122

	PAGE
JOURNAL OF THE COURT OF HONOUR . . . . .	130
JOURNAL OF THE COURT OF HONOUR . . . . .	135
THE SPECTATOR . . . . .	139
THE SPECTATOR CLUB . . . . .	145
THE VISION OF PUBLIC CREDIT . . . . .	153
THE ITALIAN OPERA . . . . .	158
SUPERSTITION . . . . .	163
CLUBS . . . . .	168
THE SPECTATOR TO HIS READERS . . . . .	173
THE SPECTATOR IN HIS LODGINGS . . . . .	178
THE LIONS AT THE HAYMARKET . . . . .	183
THE LEARNED PROFESSIONS . . . . .	188
LAMPOONS . . . . .	192
THE VALETUDINARIAN . . . . .	198
WESTMINSTER ABBEY . . . . .	203
THE PROJECTOR . . . . .	207
THE TRUE SUBJECTS OF RIDICULE . . . . .	212
A LADY'S LIBRARY . . . . .	217
STAGE ARTIFICES . . . . .	222
STAGE ARTIFICES ( <i>concluded</i> ) . . . . .	226
FEMALE AFFECTATION . . . . .	234
THE LOST MINUTES . . . . .	238
THE HAPPY HUNTING-GROUNDS . . . . .	244
FEMALE POLITICIANS . . . . .	250
FALSE WIT . . . . .	255
TRUE AND FALSE WIT . . . . .	261
THE ROYAL EXCHANGE . . . . .	270
CHEVY CHASE . . . . .	275
THE EVERLASTING CLUB . . . . .	282
PARTY PATCHES . . . . .	286
A DREAM OF PAINTERS . . . . .	291

# CONTENTS

xxix

	PAGE
PASTIMES . . . . .	296
THE RELATIVITY OF TIME . . . . .	301
THE VERDICT OF POSTERITY . . . . .	307
THE EXERCISE OF THE FAN . . . . .	312
PEDANTS . . . . .	316
THE SPECTATOR AT COVERLEY HALL . . . . .	320
WILL WIMBLE . . . . .	325
THE HAUNTED WALK . . . . .	329
A COUNTRY SUNDAY . . . . .	334
BODILY EXERCISE . . . . .	338
A VISIT TO A WITCH . . . . .	343
RURAL POLITENESS . . . . .	348
AT THE COUNTY ASSIZES . . . . .	352
ON ESSAY-WRITING . . . . .	357
PARTY RANCOUR . . . . .	361
PARTY RANCOUR ( <i>concluded</i> ) . . . . .	366
GIPSIES . . . . .	371
THE SPECTATOR RETURNS TO TOWN . . . . .	376
THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE . . . . .	380
THE VISION OF MIRZAH . . . . .	385
THE CONSTANT MIND . . . . .	392
THEODOSIUS AND CONSTANTIA . . . . .	396
THE ADULTERATION OF ENGLISH . . . . .	405
THE LEGACY OF GENIUS . . . . .	410
THE GRINNING MATCH . . . . .	414
GAIETY AND GRAVITY . . . . .	419



# ESSAYS OF ADDISON

## I

### *The Vision of Fame*

*Hic manus ob patriam pugnando vulnere passi,  
Quique pii vates et Phoebæ digna locuti,  
Inventas aut qui vitam excoluere per artes,  
Quique sui memores alios fecere merendo.*

VIRG.

*From my own Apartment, October 14.*

THERE are two kinds of immortality ; that which the soul really enjoys after this life, and that imaginary existence by which men live in their fame and reputation. The best and greatest actions have proceeded from the prospect of the one or the other of these ; but my design is to treat only of those who have chiefly proposed to themselves the latter as the principal reward of their labours. It was for this reason that I excluded from my tables of fame all the great founders and votaries of religion ; and it is for this reason also that I am more than ordinarily anxious to do justice to the persons of whom I am now going to speak ; for since



fame was the only end of all their enterprises and studies, a man cannot be too scrupulous in allotting them their due proportion of it. It was this consideration which made me call the whole body of the learned to my assistance; to many of whom I must own my obligations for the catalogues of illustrious persons which they have sent me in upon this occasion. I yesterday employed the whole afternoon in comparing them with each other; which made so strong an impression upon my imagination, that they broke my sleep for the first part of the following night, and at length threw me into a very agreeable vision, which I shall beg leave to describe in all its particulars.

I dreamed that I was conveyed into a wide and boundless plain, that was covered with prodigious multitudes of people, which no man could number. In the midst of it there stood a mountain, with its head above the clouds. The sides were extremely steep, and of such a particular structure, that no creature, which was not made in an human figure, could possibly ascend it. On a sudden there was heard from the top of it a sound like that of a trumpet; but so exceeding sweet and harmonious, that it filled the hearts of those who heard it with raptures, and gave such high and delightful sensations, as seemed to animate and raise human nature above itself. This made me very much amazed to find so very few in that innumerable multitude, who had ears fine enough to hear or relish this music with pleasure: but my wonder abated when, upon looking

round me, I saw most of them attentive to three Sirens clothed like goddesses, and distinguished by the names of Sloth, Ignorance, and Pleasure. They were seated on three rocks, amidst a beautiful variety of groves, meadows, and rivulets, that lay on the borders of the mountain. While the base and grovelling multitude of different nations, ranks, and ages were listening to these delusive deities, those of a more erect aspect and exalted spirit separated themselves from the rest, and marched in great bodies towards the mountain from whence they heard the sound, which still grew sweeter the more they listened to it.

On a sudden, methought this select band sprang forward, with a resolution to climb the ascent, and follow the call of that heavenly music. Every one took something with him that he thought might be of assistance to him in his march. Several had their swords drawn, some carried rolls of paper in their hands, some had compasses, others quadrants, others telescopes, and others pencils; some had laurels on their heads, and others buskins on their legs: in short, there was scarce any instrument of a mechanic art or liberal science, which was not made use of on this occasion. My good daemon, who stood at my right hand during the course of this whole vision, observing in me a burning desire to join that glorious company, told me he highly approved that generous ardour with which I seemed transported; but, at the same time, advised me to cover my face with a mask all the while I was to labour on the ascent. I took his counsel without inquiring into his reasons.

The whole body now broke into different parties, and began to climb the precipice by ten thousand different paths. Several got into little alleys, which did not reach far up the hill, before they ended and led no farther; and I observed that most of the artisans, which considerably diminished our number, fell into these paths.

We left another considerable body of adventurers behind us, who thought they had discovered by-ways up the hill, which proved so very intricate and perplexed, that, after having advanced in them a little, they were quite lost among the several turns and windings; and though they were as active as any in their motions, they made but little progress in the ascent. These, as my guide informed me, were men of subtle tempers and puzzled politics, who would supply the place of real wisdom with cunning and artifice. Among those who were far advanced in their way, there were some that by one false step fell backward, and lost more ground in a moment than they had gained for many hours, or could be ever able to recover. We were now advanced very high, and observed that all the different paths which ran about the sides of the mountain began to meet in two great roads, which insensibly gathered the whole multitude into two great bodies. At a little distance from the entrance of each road there stood an hideous phantom, that opposed our further passage. One of these apparitions had his right hand filled with darts, which he brandished in the face of all who came up that way: crowds ran back at the appearance of

it, and cried out, Death. The spectre that guarded the other road was Envy : she was not armed with weapons of destruction like the former ; but by dreadful hissings, noises of reproach, and a horrid, distracted laughter, she appeared more frightful than death itself, insomuch that abundance of our company were discouraged from passing any further, and some appeared ashamed of having come so far. As for myself, I must confess my heart shrunk within me at the sight of these ghastly appearances : but on a sudden the voice of the trumpet came more full upon us, so that we felt a new resolution reviving in us ; and in proportion as this resolution grew, the terrors before us seemed to vanish. Most of the company who had swords in their hands marched on with great spirit, and an air of defiance, up the road that was commanded by Death ; while others, who had thought and contemplation in their looks, went forward in a more composed manner up the road possessed by Envy. The way above these apparitions grew smooth and uniform, and was so delightful, that the travellers went on with pleasure, and in a little time arrived at the top of the mountain. They here began to breathe a delicious kind of aether, and saw all the fields about them covered with a kind of purple light, that made them reflect with satisfaction on their past toils, and diffused a secret joy through the whole assembly, which showed itself in every look and feature. In the midst of these happy fields there stood a palace of a very glorious structure : it had four great folding doors, that faced the four several quarters of the world.

On the top of it was enthroned the goddess of the mountain, who smiled upon her votaries, and sounded the silver trumpet which had called them up, and cheered them in their passage to her palace. They had now formed themselves into several divisions, a band of historians taking their stations at each door, according to the persons whom they were to introduce.

On a sudden the trumpet, which had hitherto sounded only a march, or point of war, now swelled all its notes into triumph and exultation : the whole fabric shook, and the doors flew open. The first who stepped forward was a beautiful and blooming hero, and as I heard by the murmurs round me, Alexander the Great. He was conducted by a crowd of historians. The person who immediately walked before him was remarkable for an embroidered garment, who, not being well acquainted with the place, was conducting him to an apartment appointed for the reception of fabulous heroes. The name of this false guide was Quintus Curtius. But Arrian and Plutarch, who knew better the avenues of this palace, conducted him into the great hall, and placed him at the upper end of the first table. My good daemon, that I might see the whole ceremony, conveyed me to a corner of this room, where I might perceive all that passed without being seen myself. The next who entered was a charming virgin, leading in a venerable old man that was blind. Under her left arm she bore a harp, and on her head a garland. Alexander, who was very well acquainted with Homer, stood up at his entrance and placed him on his right

hand. The virgin, who it seems was one of the nine sisters that attended on the goddess of Fame, smiled with an ineffable grace at their meeting, and retired.

Julius Caesar was now coming forward ; and though most of the historians offered their service to introduce him, he left them at the door, and would have no conductor but himself.

The next who advanced was a man of a homely but cheerful aspect, and attended by persons of greater figure than any that appeared on this occasion. Plato was on his right hand, and Xenophon on his left. He bowed to Homer, and sat down by him. It was expected that Plato would himself have taken a place next to his master Socrates ; but on a sudden there was heard a great clamour of disputants at the door, who appeared with Aristotle at the head of them. That philosopher, with some rudeness, but great strength of reason, convinced the whole table that a title to the fifth place was his due, and took it accordingly.

He had scarce sat down, when the same beautiful virgin that had introduced Homer brought in another, who hung back at the entrance, and would have excused himself, had not his modesty been overcome by the invitation of all who sat at the table. His guide and behaviour made me easily conclude it was Virgil. Cicero next appeared, and took his place. He had inquired at the door for one Lucceius to introduce him ; but not finding him there, he contented himself with

the attendance of many other writers, who all, except Sallust, appeared highly pleased with the office.

We waited some time in expectation of the next worthy, who came in with a great retinue of historians, whose names I could not learn, most of them being natives of Carthage. The person thus conducted, who was Hannibal, seemed much disturbed, and could not forbear complaining to the board of the affronts he had met with among the Roman historians, who attempted, says he, to carry me into the subterraneous apartment ; and, perhaps, would have done it, had it not been for the impartiality of this gentleman, pointing to Polybius, who was the only person, except my own countrymen, that was willing to conduct me hither.

The Carthaginian took his seat, and Pompey entered with great dignity in his own person, and preceded by several historians. Lucan the poet was at the head of them, who, observing Homer and Virgil at the table, was going to sit down himself, had not the latter whispered him, that whatever pretence he might otherwise have had, he forfeited his claim to it by coming in as one of the historians. Lucan was so exasperated with the repulse, that he muttered something to himself, and was heard to say, that since he could not have a seat among them himself he would bring in one who, alone, had more merit than their whole assembly : upon which he went to the door, and brought in Cato of Utica. That great man approached the company with such an air, that showed he contemned the honour which he laid a claim to. Observing the seat opposite

to Cæsar was vacant, he took possession of it, and spoke two or three smart sentences upon the nature of precedency, which, according to him, consisted not in place, but in intrinsic merit; to which he added, that the most virtuous man, wherever he was seated, was always at the upper end of the table. Socrates, who had a great spirit of raillery with his wisdom, could not forbear smiling at a virtue which took so little pains to make itself agreeable. Cicero took the occasion to make a long discourse in praise of Cato, which he uttered with much vehemence. Caesar answered with a great deal of seeming temper, but, as I stood at a great distance from them, I was not able to hear one word of what they said. But I could not forbear taking notice, that in all the discourse which passed at the table, a word or a nod from Homer decided the controversy.

After a short pause Augustus appeared, looking round him with a serene and affable countenance upon all the writers of his age, who strove among themselves which of them should show him the greatest marks of gratitude and respect. Virgil rose from the table to meet him; and though he was an acceptable guest to all, he appeared more such to the learned than the military worthies. The next man astonished the whole table with his appearance: he was slow, solemn, and silent in his behaviour, and wore a raiment curiously wrought with hieroglyphics. As he came into the middle of the room, he threw back the skirt of it, and discovered a golden thigh. Socrates, at the sight of it,



declared against keeping company with any who were not made of flesh and blood ; and therefore desired Diogenes the Laertian to lead him to the apartment allotted for fabulous heroes and worthies of dubious existence. At his going out, he told them that they did not know whom they dismissed ; that he was now Pythagoras, the first of philosophers, and that formerly he had been a very brave man at the siege of Troy. That may be very true, said Socrates ; but you forget that you have likewise been a very great harlot in your time. This exclusion made way for Archimedes, who came forward with a scheme of mathematical figures in his hand ; among which I observed a cone and a cylinder.

Seeing this table full, I desired my guide, for variety, to lead me to the fabulous apartment, the roof of which was painted with gorgons, chimeras, and centaurs, with many other emblematical figures, which I wanted both time and skill to unriddle. The first table was almost full. At the upper end sat Hercules, leaning an arm upon his club ; on his right hand were Achilles and Ulysses, and between them Aeneas ; on his left were Hector, Theseus, and Jason ; the lower end had Orpheus, Aesop, Phalaris, and Musaeus. The ushers seemed at a loss for a twelfth man, when methought, to my great joy and surprise, I heard some at the lower end of the table mention Isaac Bickerstaff ; but those of the upper end received it with disdain, and said, if they must have a British worthy, they would have Robin Hood.

While I was transported with the honour that was done me, and burning with envy against my competitor, I was awakened by the noise of the cannon, which were then fired for the taking of Mons. I should have been very much troubled at being thrown out of so pleasing a vision on any other occasion; but thought it an agreeable change to have my thoughts diverted from the greatest among the dead and fabulous heroes, to the most famous among the real and the living.

*The Tatler*, No. 81.

Saturday, October 15, 1709.

## II

### *The Choice of Hercules*

*Illud maxime rarum genus est eorum, qui aut eccellente ingenii magnitudine, aut praeclara eruditione atque doctrina, aut utraque re ornati, spatium deliberandi habuerunt, quem potissimum vitae cursum sequi vellent.*—TULL. *Offic.*

*From my own Apartment, November 21.*

HAVING swept away prodigious multitudes in my last paper, and brought a great destruction upon my own species, I must endeavour in this to raise fresh recruits, and, if possible, to supply the places of the unborn and the deceased. It is said of Xerxes, that when he stood upon a hill, and saw the whole country round him covered with his army, he burst out into tears, to think that not one of that multitude would be alive a hundred years after. For my part, when I take a survey of this populous city, I can scarce forbear weeping, to see how few of its inhabitants are now living.

It was with this thought that I drew up my last bill of mortality, and endeavoured to set out in it the great number of persons who have perished by a distemper, commonly known by the name of idleness,<sup>a</sup> which has long raged in the world, and destroys more in every great town than the plague has done at Dantzic. To repair the mischief it has done, and stock the world with a better race of mortals, I have more hopes of bringing to life those that are young than of reviving those that are old. For which reason, I shall here set down that noble allegory which was written by an old author called Prodicus, but recommended and embellished by Socrates. It is the description of Virtue and Pleasure making their court to Hercules under the appearances of two beautiful women.

When Hercules, says the divine moralist, was in that part of his youth in which it was natural for him to consider what course of life he ought to pursue, he one day retired into a desert, where the silence and solitude of the place very much favoured his meditations. As he was musing on his present condition, and very much perplexed in himself on the state of life he should choose, he saw two women of a larger stature than ordinary approaching towards him. One of them had a very noble air and graceful deportment; her beauty was natural and easy, her person clean and unspotted, her eyes cast towards the ground with an agreeable reserve, her motion and behaviour full of modesty, and her raiment as white as snow. The other had a great deal of health and floridness in her countenance, which she

had helped with an artificial white and red ; and endeavoured to appear more graceful than ordinary in her mien, by a mixture of affectation in all her gestures. She had a wonderful confidence and assurance in her looks, and all the variety of colours in her dress that she thought were the most proper to show her complexion to an advantage. She cast her eyes upon herself, then turned them on those that were present, to see how they liked her, and often looked on the figure she made in her own shadow. Upon her nearer approach to Hercules she stepped before the other lady (who came forward with a regular, composed carriage), and running up to him, accosted him after the following manner :

“ My dear Hercules,” says she, “ I find you are very much divided in your own thoughts upon the way of life you ought to choose : be my friend, and follow me ; I will lead you into the possession of pleasure, and out of the reach of pain, and remove you from all the noise and disquietude of business. The affairs of either war or peace shall have no power to disturb you. Your whole employment shall be to make your life easy, and to entertain every sense with its proper gratification. Sumptuous tables, beds of roses, clouds of perfumes, concerts of music, crowds of beauties, are all in a readiness to receive you. Come along with me into this region of delights, this world of pleasure, and bid farewell for ever to care, to pain, to business—”

Hercules, hearing the lady talk after this manner, desired to know her name ; to which she answered,

"My friends, and those who are well acquainted with me, call me Happiness ; but my enemies, and those who would injure my reputation, have given me the name of Pleasure."

By this time the other lady was come up, who addressed herself to the young hero in a very different manner.

"Hercules," says she, "I offer myself to you, because I know you are descended from the gods, and give proofs of that descent by your love to virtue, and application to the studies proper for your age. This makes me hope you will gain, both for yourself and me, an immortal reputation. But before I invite you into my society and friendship I will be open and sincere with you, and must lay down this as an established truth, that there is nothing truly valuable which can be purchased without pains and labour. The gods have set a price upon every real and noble pleasure. If you would gain the favour of the deity, you must be at the pains of worshipping him ; if the friendship of good men, you must study to oblige them ; if you would be honoured by your country, you must take care to serve it. In short, if you would be eminent in war or peace, you must become master of all the qualifications that can make you so. These are the only terms and conditions upon which I can propose happiness."

The goddess of Pleasure here broke in upon her discourse : "You see," said she, "Hercules, by her own confession, the way to her pleasure is long and difficult, whereas that which I propose is short and easy."

“Alas,” said the other lady, whose visage glowed with a passion made up of scorn and pity, “what are the pleasures you propose ? to eat before you are hungry, drink before you are athirst, sleep before you are tired, to gratify appetites before they are raised, and raise such appetites as nature never planted. You never heard the most delicious music, which is the praise of one’s self ; nor saw the most beautiful object, which is the work of one’s own hands. Your votaries pass away their youth in a dream of mistaken pleasures, while they are hoarding up anguish, torment, and remorse for old age. As for me, I am the friend of gods and of good men, an agreeable companion to the artisan, a household guardian to the fathers of families, a patron and protector of servants, an associate in all true and generous friendships. The banquets of my votaries are never costly, but always delicious ; for none eat or drink at them who are not invited by hunger and thirst. Their slumbers are sound, and their wakings cheerful. My young men have the pleasure of hearing themselves praised by those who are in years ; and those who are in years, of being honoured by those who are young. In a word, my followers are favoured by the gods, beloved by their acquaintance, esteemed by their country, and, after the close of their labours, honoured by posterity.”

We know, by the life of this honourable hero, to which of these two ladies he gave up his heart ; and I believe, every one who reads this will do him the justice to approve his choice.

I very much admire the speeches of these ladies, as containing in them the chief arguments for a life of virtue, or a life of pleasure, that could enter into the thoughts of an heathen ; but am particularly pleased with the different figures he gives the two goddesses. Our modern authors have represented Pleasure or Vice with an alluring face, but ending in snakes and monsters: here she appears in all the charms of beauty, though they were all false and borrowed ; and by that means, composes a vision entirely natural and pleasing.

I have translated this allegory for the benefit of the youth of Great Britain ; and particularly of those who are still in the deplorable state of non-existence, and whom I most earnestly entreat to come into the world. Let my embryos show the least inclination to any single virtue, and I shall allow it to be a struggling towards birth. I do not expect of them that, like the hero in the foregoing story, they should go about as soon as they are born, with a club in their hands, and a lion's skin on their shoulders, to root out monsters, and destroy tyrants ; but, as the finest author of all antiquity has said upon this very occasion, though a man has not the abilities to distinguish himself in the most shining parts of a great character, he has certainly the capacity of being just, faithful, modest, and temperate.

*The Tatler*, No. 97.

Tuesday, November 22, 1709.

## III

*The Vision of Justice*

*Jam redit et Virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna.*—VIRG.

*Sheer Lane, November 28.*

I WAS last week taking a solitary walk in the garden of Lincoln's Inn (a favour that is indulged me by several of the benchers, who are my intimate friends, and grown old with me in this neighbourhood), when, according to the nature of men in years, who have made but little progress in the advancement of their fortune or their fame, I was repining at the sudden rise of many persons who are my juniors, and indeed at the unequal distribution of wealth, honour, and all other blessings of life. I was lost in this thought, when the night came upon me, and drew my mind into a far more agreeable contemplation. The heaven above me appeared in all its glories, and presented me with such an hemisphere of stars as made the most agreeable prospect imaginable to one who delights in the study of nature. It happened to be a freezing night, which had purified the whole body of air into such a bright transparent aether as made every constellation visible; and at the same time gave such a particular glowing to the stars, that I thought it the richest sky I had ever seen. I could not behold a scene so wonderfully adorned and lighted up, if I may be allowed that expression, without suitable meditations on the Author of such



illustrious and amazing objects, for on these occasions philosophy suggests motives to religion, and religion adds pleasures to philosophy.

As soon as I had recovered my usual temper and serenity of soul, I retired to my lodgings with the satisfaction of having passed away a few hours in the proper employments of a reasonable creature, and promising myself that my slumbers would be sweet. I no sooner fell into them, but I dreamed a dream, or saw a vision (for I know not which to call it), that seemed to rise out of my evening meditation, and had something in it so solemn and serious, that I cannot forbear communicating it; though I must confess, the wildness of imagination (which in a dream is always loose and irregular) discovers itself too much in several parts of it.

Methought I saw the same azure sky diversified with the same glorious luminaries which had entertained me a little before I fell asleep. I was looking very attentively on that sign in the heavens which is called by the name of the Balance, when on a sudden there appeared in it an extraordinary light, as if the sun should rise at midnight. By its increasing in breadth and lustre, I soon found that it approached towards the earth; and at length could discern something like a shadow hovering in the midst of a great glory, which in a little time after I distinctly perceived to be the figure of a woman. I fancied at first it might have been the Angel or Intelligence that guided the constellation from which it descended; but upon a nearer view, I saw about her

all the emblems with which the Goddess of Justice is usually described. Her countenance was unspeakably awful and majestic, but exquisitely beautiful to those whose eyes were strong enough to behold it ; her smiles transported with rapture, her frowns terrified to despair. She held in her hand a mirror endowed with the same qualities as that which the painters put into the hand of Truth.

There streamed from it a light, which distinguished itself from all the splendours that surrounded her, more than a flash of lightning shines in the midst of daylight. As she moved it in her hand, it brightened the heavens, the air, or the earth. When she had descended so low as to be seen and heard by mortals, to make the pomp of her appearance more supportable, she threw darkness and clouds about her, that tempered the light into a thousand beautiful shades and colours, and multiplied that lustre, which was before too strong and dazzling, into a variety of milder glories.

In the meantime the world was in an alarm, and all the inhabitants of it gathered together upon a spacious plain ; so that I seemed to have the whole species before my eyes. A voice was heard from the clouds, declaring the intention of this visit, which was to restore and appropriate to every one living what was his due. The fear and hope, joy and sorrow, which appeared in that great assembly after this solemn declaration are not to be expressed. The first edict was then pronounced, " That all titles and claims to riches and estates, or to any parts of them, should be immediately

vested in the rightful owner." ' Upon this, the inhabitants of the earth held up the instruments of their tenure, whether in parchment, paper, wax, or any other form of conveyance; and as the goddess moved the mirror of truth which she held in her hand, so that the light which flowed from it fell upon the multitude, they examined the several instruments by the beams of it. The rays of this mirror had a particular quality of setting fire to all forgery and falsehood. The blaze of papers, the melting of seals, and crackling of parchments made a very odd scene. The fire very often ran through two or three lines only, and then stopped; though I could not but observe that the flame chiefly broke out among the interlineations and codicils. The light of the mirror, as it was turned up and down, pierced into all the dark corners and recesses of the universe, and by that means detected many writings and records which had been hidden or buried by time, chance, or design. This occasioned a wonderful revolution among the people. At the same time, the spoils of extortion, fraud, and robbery, with all the fruits of bribery and corruption, were thrown together into a prodigious pile, that almost reached to the clouds, and was called the Mount of Restitution; to which all injured persons were invited, to receive what belonged to them.

One might see crowds of people in tattered garments come up and change clothes with others that were dressed with lace and embroidery. Several who were plums, or very near it, became men of moderate

fortunes ; and many others, who were overgrown in wealth and possessions, had no more left than what they usually spent. What moved my concern most was, to see a certain street of the greatest credit in Europe from one end to the other become bankrupt.

The next command was, for the whole body of mankind to separate themselves into their proper families ; which was no sooner done, but an edict was issued out, requiring all children "to repair to their true and natural fathers." This put a great part of the assembly in motion ; for as the mirror was moved over them, it inspired every one with such a natural instinct as directed them to their real parents. It was a very melancholy spectacle to see the fathers of very large families become childless, and bachelors undone by a charge of sons and daughters. You might see a presumptive heir of a great estate ask blessing of his coachman, and a celebrated coast paying her duty to a valet de chambre. Many under vows of celibacy appeared surrounded with a numerous issue. This change of parentage would have caused great lamentation, but that the calamity was pretty common ; and that generally those who lost their children had the satisfaction of seeing them put into the hands of their dearest friends. Men were no sooner settled in their right to their possessions and their progeny, but there was a third order proclaimed, "That all the posts of dignity and honour in the universe should be conferred on persons of the greatest merit, abilities, and perfection." The handsome, the strong, and the wealthy

immediately pressed forward ; but not being able to bear the splendour of the mirror which played upon their faces, they immediately fell back among the crowd ; but as the goddess tried the multitude by her glass, as the eagle does its young ones by the lustre of the sun, it was remarkable that every one turned away his face from it who had not distinguished himself either by virtue, knowledge, or capacity in business, either military or civil. This select assembly was drawn up in the centre of a prodigious multitude, which was diffused on all sides, and stood observing them, as idle people use to gather about a regiment that are exercising their arms. They were drawn up in three bodies : in the first, were the men of virtue ; in the second, men of knowledge ; and in the third, the men of business. It was impossible to look at the first column without a secret veneration, their aspects were so sweetened with humanity, raised with contemplation, emboldened with resolution, and adorned with the most agreeable airs, which are those that proceed from secret habits of virtue. I could not but take notice that there were many faces among them which were unknown, not only to the multitude, but even to several of their own body.

In the second column, consisting of the men of knowledge, there had been great disputes before they fell into the ranks, which they did not do at last without the positive command of the goddess who presided over the assembly. She had so ordered it, that men of the greatest genius and strongest sense were placed at the

head of the column : behind these were such as had formed their minds very much on the thoughts and writings of others. In the rear of the column were men who had more wit than sense, or more learning than understanding. All living authors of any value were ranged in one of these classes ; but I must confess I was very much surprised to see a great body of editors, critics, commentators, and grammarians meet with so very ill a reception. They had formed themselves into a body, and with a great deal of arrogance demanded the first station in the column of knowledge ; but the goddess, instead of complying with their request, clapped them all into liveries, and bid them know themselves for no other but lacqueys of the learned.

The third column were men of business, and consisting of persons in military and civil capacities. The former marched out from the rest, and placed themselves in the front ; at which the others shook their heads at them, but did not think fit to dispute the post with them. I could not but make several observations upon this last column of people ; but I have certain private reasons why I do not think fit to communicate them to the public. In order to fill up all the posts of honour, dignity, and profit, there was a draught made out of each column, of men who were masters of all three qualifications in some degree, and were preferred to stations of the first rank. The second draught was made out of such as were possessed of any two of the qualifications, who were disposed of in stations of a second dignity. Those who were left, and were

endowed only with one of them, had their suitable posts. When this was over, there remained many places of trust and profit unfilled, for which there were fresh draughts made out of the surrounding multitude, who had any appearance of these excellencies, or were recommended by those who possessed them in reality.

All were surprised to see so many new faces in the most eminent dignities ; and for my own part, I was very well pleased to see that all my friends either kept their present posts or were advanced to higher.

Having filled my paper with those particulars of my vision which concern the male part of mankind, I must reserve for another occasion the sequel of it, which relates to the fair sex.

*The Tatler*, No. 100.

Tuesday, November 29, 1709.

#### IV

#### *Literary Pirates*

—*Postquam fregit subsellia versu  
Esurit intactam Paridi nisi vendit Agaven.*—JUV.

*From my own Apartment, November 30.*

THE progress of my intended account of what happened when Justice visited mortals, is at present interrupted by the observation and sense of an injustice against which there is no remedy, even in a kingdom more happy in the care taken of the liberty and property of

the subject than any other nation upon earth. This iniquity is committed by a most impregnable set of mortals, men who are rogues within the law ; and in the very commission of what they are guilty of, professedly own that they forbear no injury, but from the terror of being punished for it. These miscreants are a set of wretches we authors call pirates, who print any book, poem, or sermon, as soon as it appears in the world, in a smaller volume, and sell it, as all other thieves do stolen goods, at a cheaper rate. I was in my rage calling them rascals, plunderers, robbers, highwaymen. But they acknowledge all that, and are pleased with those, as well as any other titles ; nay, will print them themselves to turn the penny.

I am extremely at a loss how to act against such open enemies, who have not shame enough to be touched with our reproaches, and are as well defended against what we can say as what we can do. Railing, therefore, we must turn into complaint, which I cannot forbear making, when I consider that all the labours of my long life may be disappointed by the first man that pleases to rob me. I had flattered myself that my stock of learning was worth a hundred and fifty pounds *per annum*, which would very handsomely maintain me and my little family, who are so happy, or so wise, as to want only necessities. Before men had come up to this bare-faced impudence, it was an estate to have a competency of understanding.

An ingenious droll, who is since dead (and indeed it



is well for him he is so, for he must have starved had he lived to this day), used to give me an account of his good husbandry in the management of his learning. He was a general dealer, and had his amusements as well comical as serious. The merry rogue said, when he wanted a dinner, he writ a paragraph of Table Talk, and his bookseller upon sight paid the reckoning. He was a very good judge of what would please the people, and could aptly hit both the genius of his readers and the season of the year in his writings. His brain, which was his estate, had as regular and different produce as other men's land. From the beginning of November till the opening of the campaign he writ pamphlets and letters to members of parliament, or friends in the country ; but sometimes he would relieve his ordinary readers with a murder, and lived comfortably a week or two upon strange and lamentable accidents.<sup>1</sup> A little before the armies took the field, his way was to open your attention with a prodigy ; and a monster well writ was two guineas the lowest price. This prepared his readers for great and bloody news from Flanders in June and July. Poor Tom ! he is gone. But I observed, he always looked well after a battle, and was apparently fatter in a fighting year. Had this honest, careless fellow lived till now, famine had stared him in the face, and interrupted his merri-

<sup>1</sup> It is to be remembered that this paper, like most of Addison's essays, was written during the continuance of the long war with France, when, in accordance with old custom, armies regularly retired into winter quarters at the close of the summer and resumed operations in the spring.

ment, as it must be a solid affliction to all those whose pen is their portion.

As for my part, I do not speak wholly for my own sake in this point; for palmistry and astrology will bring me in greater gains than these my papers;<sup>1</sup> so that I am only in the condition of a lawyer who leaves the bar for chamber practice. However, I may be allowed to speak in the cause of learning itself, and lament that a liberal education is the only one which a polite nation makes unprofitable. All mechanical artisans are allowed to reap the fruit of their invention and ingenuity without invasion; but he that has separated himself from the rest of mankind, and studied the wonders of the creation, the government of his passions, and the revolutions of the world, and has an ambition to communicate the effect of half his life spent in such noble inquiries, has no property in what he is willing to produce, but is exposed to robbery and want, with this melancholy and just reflection, that he is the only man who is not protected by his country, at the same time that he best deserves it.

According to the ordinary rules of computation, the greater the adventure is, the greater ought to be the profit of those who succeed in it; and by this measure, none have pretence of turning their labours to greater

<sup>1</sup> The nominal author of *The Tatler* was a certain imaginary Isaac Bickerstaff, who eked out the precarious gains of pure literature by the much more solid resources of palmistry and astrology. From the present passage we learn that he wisely trusted for his daily bread rather to the ignorance and gullibility of the public than to their reason and sense.

advantage than persons brought up to letters. A learned education, passing through great schools and universities, is very expensive, and consumes a moderate<sup>1</sup> fortune, before it is gone through in its proper forms. The purchase of an handsome commission or employment, which would give a man a good figure in another kind of life, is to be made at a much cheaper rate. Now, if we consider this expensive voyage which is undertaken in the search of knowledge, and how few there are who take in any considerable merchandise, how less frequent it is to be able to turn what men have gained into profit; how hard is it, that the very small number who are distinguished with abilities to know how to vend their wares, and have the good fortune to bring them into port, should suffer being plundered by privateers under the very cannon that should protect them ! The most eminent and useful author of the age we live in, after having laid out a princely revenue in works of charity and beneficence, as became the greatness of his mind and the sanctity of his character, would have left the person in the world who was the dearest<sup>2</sup> to him in a narrow condition, had not the sale of his immortal writings brought her in a very considerable dowry ; though it was impossible for it to be equal to their value. Every one will know that I here mean the works of the late Archbishop of Canterbury,<sup>1</sup> the copy of which was sold for £2500.

I do not speak with relation to any party ; but it has happened, and may often so happen, that men of great

<sup>1</sup> Tillotson.

learning and virtue cannot qualify themselves for being employed in business, or receiving preferments. In this case, you cut them off from all support, if you take from them the Benefit that may arise from their writings. For my own part, I have brought myself to consider things in so unprejudiced a manner, that I esteem more a man who can live by the products of his understanding, than one who does it by the favour of great men.

The zeal of an author has transported me thus far, though I think myself as much concerned in the capacity of a reader. If this practice goes on, we must never expect to see again a beautiful edition of a book in Great Britain. We have already seen the memoirs of Sir William Temple published in the same character and volume with the history of Tom Thumb, and the works of our greatest poets shrunk into penny books and garlands. For my own part, I expect to see my lucubrations printed on browner paper than they are at present; and, if the humour continues, must be forced to retrench my expensive way of living, and not smoke above two pipes a day.

*The Tatler*, No. 101.

Thursday, December 23, 1709.

## V

### *The Vision of Justice (concluded)*

*From my own Apartment, December 2.*

THE male world were dismissed by the Goddess of Justice, and disappeared, when on a sudden the whole

plain was covered with women. So charming a multitude filled my heart with unspeakable pleasure ; and as the celestial light of the mirror shone upon their faces, several of them seemed rather persons that descended in the train of the goddess, than such who were brought before her to their trial. The clack of tongues and confusion of voices in this new assembly were so very great that the goddess was forced to command silence several times, and with some severity, before she could make them attentive to her edicts. They were all sensible that the most important affair among woman-kind was then to be settled, which every one knows to be the point of place. This had raised innumerable disputes among them, and put the whole sex into a tumult. Every one produced her claim and pleaded her pretensions. Birth, beauty, wit, or wealth were words that rung in my ears from all parts of the plain. Some boasted of the merit of their husbands ; others, of their own power in governing them. Some pleaded their unspotted virginity ; others, their numerous issue. Some valued themselves as they were the mothers, and others as they were the daughters, of considerable persons. There was not a single accomplishment unmentioned or unpractised. The whole congregation was full of singing, dancing, tossing, ogling, squeaking, smiling, sighing, fanning, frowning, and all those irresistible arts which women put in practice to captivate the hearts of reasonable creatures. The goddess, to end this dispute, caused it to be proclaimed, " That every one should take place according as she

was more or less beautiful." This declaration gave great satisfaction to the whole assembly, which immediately bridled up, and appeared in all its beauties. Such as believed themselves graceful in their motion found an occasion of falling back, advancing forward, or making a false step, that they might show their persons in the most becoming air. Such as had fine necks and bosoms were wonderfully curious to look over the heads of the multitude, and observe the most distant parts of the assembly. Several clapped their hands on their foreheads, as helping their sight to look upon the glories that surrounded the goddess, but in reality to show fine hands and arms. The ladies were yet better pleased when they heard that in the decision of this great controversy each of them should be her own judge, and take her place according to her own opinion of herself, when she consulted her looking-glass.

The goddess then let down the mirror of truth in a golden chain, which appeared larger in proportion as it descended and approached nearer to the eyes of the beholders. It was the particular property of this looking-glass to banish all false appearances, and show people what they are. The whole woman was represented, without regard to the usual external features, which were made entirely conformable to their real characters. In short, the most accomplished (taking in the whole circle of female perfections) were the most beautiful; and the most defective, the most deformed. The goddess so varied the motion of the glass, and

placed it in so many different lights, that each had an opportunity of seeing herself in it.

It is impossible to describe the rage, the pleasure, or astonishment that appeared in each face upon its representation in the mirror: multitudes started at their own form, and would have broke the glass if they could have reached it. - Many saw their blooming features wither as they looked upon them, and their self-admiration turned into a loathing and abhorrence. The lady who was thought so agreeable in her anger, and was so often celebrated for a woman of fire and spirit, was frightened at her own image, and fancied she saw a fury in the glass. The interested mistress beheld a harpy, and the subtle jilt a sphinx. I was very much troubled in my own heart to see such a destruction of fine faces; but at the same time had the pleasure of seeing several improved, which I had before looked upon as the greatest masterpieces of nature. I observed that some few were so humble as to be surprised at their own charms; and that many a one, who had lived in the retirement and severity of a vestal, shined forth in all the graces and attractions of a siren. I was ravished at the sight of a particular image in the mirror, which I think the most beautiful object that my eyes ever beheld. There was something more than human in her countenance: her eyes were so full of light that they seemed to beautify everything they looked upon. Her face was enlivened with such a florid bloom as did not so properly seem the mark of health as of immortality. Her shape, her stature, and

her maen were such as distinguished her even there where the whole fair sex was assembled.

I was impatient to see the lady represented by so divine an image, whom I found to be the person that stood at my right hand, and in the same point of view with myself. This was a little old woman, who in her prime had been about five foot high, though at present shrunk to about three-quarters of that measure. Her natural aspect was puckered up with wrinkles, and her head covered with grey hairs. I had observed all along an innocent cheerfulness in her face, which was now heightened into rapture as she beheld herself in the glass. It was an odd circumstance in my dream, but I cannot forbear relating it, I conceived so great an inclination towards her, that I had thoughts of discoursing her upon the point of marriage, when on a sudden she was carried from me; for the word was now given, that all who were pleased with their own images should separate and place themselves at the head of their sex.

This detachment was afterwards divided into three bodies, consisting of maids, wives, and widows, the wives being placed in the middle, with the maids on the right, and widows on the left; though it was with difficulty that these two last bodies were hindered from falling into the centre. This separation of those who liked their real selves, not having lessened the number of the main body so considerably as it might have been wished, the goddess, after having drawn up her mirror, thought fit to make new distinctions among those who



did not like the figure which they saw in it. She made several wholesome edicts, which are slipped out of my mind ; but there were two which dwelt upon me, as being very extraordinary in their kind and executed with great severity. Their design was to make an example of two extremes in the female world ; of those who are very severe on the conduct of others, and of those who are very regardless of their own. The first sentence, therefore, the goddess pronounced was, that all females addicted to censoriousness and detraction should lose the use of speech ; a punishment which would be the most grievous to the offender, and, what should be the end of all punishments, effectual for rooting out the crime. Upon this edict, which was as soon executed as published, the noise of this assembly very considerably abated. It was a melancholy spectacle to see so many who had the reputation of rigid virtue struck dumb. A lady who stood by me, and saw my concern, told me she wondered how I could be concerned for such a pack of —. I found, by the shaking of her head, she was going to give me their characters ; but by her saying no more, I perceived she had lost the command of her tongue. This calamity fell very heavy upon that part of women who are distinguished by the name of Prudes, a courtly word for female hypocrites, who have a short way to being virtuous, by showing that others are vicious. The second sentence was then pronounced against the loose part of the sex, that all should immediately be pregnant who in any part of their

lives had run the hazard of it. This produced a very goodly appearance, and revealed so many misconducts, that made those who were lately struck dumb, repine more than ever at their want of utterance, though at the same time, as afflictions seldom come single, many of the mutes were also seized with this new calamity. The ladies were now in such a condition that they would have wanted room, had not the plain been large enough to let them divide their ground, and extend their lines on all sides. It was a sensible affliction to me to see such a multitude of fair ones either dumb or big-bellied ; but I was something more at ease when I found that they agreed upon several regulations to cover such misfortunes. Among others, that it should be an established maxim in all nations, that a woman's first child might come into the world within six months after her acquaintance with her husband ; and that grief might retard the birth of her last fourteen months after his decease.

This vision lasted till my usual hour of waking, which I did with some surprise, to find myself alone, after having been engaged almost a whole night in so prodigious a multitude. I could not but reflect with wonder at the partiality and extravagance of my vision ; which, according to my thoughts, has not done justice to the sex. If virtue in men is more venerable, it is in women more lovely ; which Milton has very finely expressed in his *Paradise Lost*, where Adam, speaking of Eve, after having asserted his own pre-eminence, as being first in

creation and internal faculties, breaks out into the following rapture :

—Yet when I approach  
 Her loveliness, so absolute she seems,  
 And in herself complete, so well to know  
 Her own, that what she wills to do, or say.  
 Seems wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best.  
 All higher knowledge in her presence falls  
 Degraded. Wisdom, in discourse with her,  
 Loses, discountenanced, and like folly shows.  
 Authority and reason on her wait,  
 As one intended first, not after made  
 Occasionally : and, to consummate all,  
 Greatness of mind, and nobleness, their seat  
 Build in her loveliness, and create an awe  
 About her, as a guard angelic placed.

*The Tatler*, No. 102.

Saturday, December 3, 1709.

## VI

### *The Hooped Petticoat*

—*Pars minima est ipsa puella sui.*—OVID.

*Sheer Lane, January 4.*

THE court being prepared for proceeding on the cause of the petticoat, I gave orders to bring in a criminal who was taken up as she went out of the puppet-show about three nights ago, and was now standing in the street with a great concourse of people about her. Word was brought me that she had endeavoured twice or thrice to come in, but could not do it by reason of her petticoat, which was too large for the entrance of

my house, though I had ordered both the folding-doors to be thrown open for its reception. Upon this, I desired the jury of matrons, who stood at my right hand, to inform themselves of her condition, and know whether there were any private reasons why she might not make her appearance separate from her petticoat. This was managed with great discretion, and had such an effect, that upon the return of the verdict from the bench of matrons I issued out an order forthwith, that the criminal should be stripped of her encumbrances till she became little enough to enter my house. I had before given directions for an engine of several legs, that could contract or open itself like the top of an umbrella, in order to place the petticoat upon it, by which means I might take a leisurely survey of it, as it should appear in its proper dimensions. This was all done accordingly ; and forthwith, upon the closing of the engine, the petticoat was brought into court. I then directed the machine to be set upon the table, and dilated in such a manner as to show the garment in its utmost circumference ; but my great hall was too narrow for the experiment ; for before it was half unfolded, it described so immoderate a circle that the lower part of it brushed upon my face as I sat in my chair of judicature. I then inquired for the person that belonged to the petticoat ; and, to my great surprise, was directed to a very beautiful young damsel, with so pretty a face and shape that I bid her come out of the crowd, and seated her upon a little crock at my left hand. " My pretty maid," said I, " do you own

yourself to have been the inhabitant of the garment before us ?” • The girl I found had good sense, and told me with a smile, that notwithstanding it was her own petticoat, she should be very glad to see an example made of it ; and that she wore it for no other reason, but that she had a mind to look as big and burly as other persons of her quality ; that she had kept out of it as long as she could, and till she began to appear little in the eyes of all her acquaintance ; that if she laid it aside, people would think she was not made like other women. I always give great allowances to the fair sex upon account of the fashion, and therefore was not displeased with the defence of my pretty criminal. I then ordered the vest which stood before us to be drawn up by a pulley to the top of my great hall, and afterwards to be spread open by the engine it was placed upon, in such a manner that it formed a very splendid and ample canopy over our heads, and covered the whole court of judicature with a kind of silken rotunda, in its form not unlike the cupola of St. Paul’s. I entered upon the whole cause with great satisfaction, as I sat under the shadow of it.

The counsel for the petticoat was now called in, and ordered to produce what they had to say against the popular cry which was raised against it. They answered the objections with great strength and solidity of argument, and expatiated in very florid harangues, which they did not fail to set off and furbelow (if I may be allowed the metaphor) with many periodical sentences and turns of oratory. The chief arguments

for their client were taken, first, from the great benefit that might arise to our woollen manufactory from this invention, which was calculated as follows: the common petticoat has not above four yards in the circumference, whereas this over our heads had more in the semi-diameter; so that by allowing it twenty-four yards in the circumference, the five millions of woollen petticoats, which, according to Sir William Petty (supposing what ought to be supposed in a well-governed state, that all petticoats are made of that stuff), would amount to thirty millions of those of the ancient mode. A prodigious improvement of the woollen trade! and what could not fail to sink the power of France in a few years.

To introduce the second argument, they begged leave to read a petition of the rope-makers, wherein it was represented that the demand for cords, and the price of them, were much risen since this fashion came up. At this, all the company who were present lifted up their eyes into the vault; and I must confess, we did discover many traces of cordage which were interwoven in the stiffening of the drapery.

A third argument was founded upon a petition of the Greenland trade, which likewise represented the great consumption of whalebone which would be occasioned by the present fashion, and the benefit which would thereby accrue to that branch of the British trade.

To conclude, they gently touched upon the weight and unwieldiness of the garment, which they insinu-

ated might be of great use to preserve the honour of families.

These arguments would have wrought very much upon me, as I then told the company in a long and elaborate discourse, had I not considered the great and additional expense which such fashions would bring upon fathers and husbands; and therefore by no means to be thought of till some years after a peace. I further urged, that it would be a prejudice to the ladies themselves, who could never expect to have any money in the pocket, if they laid out so much on the petticoat. To this I added, the great temptation it might give to virgins, of acting in security like married women, and by that means give a check to matrimony, an institution always encouraged by wise societies.

At the same time, in answer to the several petitions produced on that side, I showed one subscribed by the women of several persons of quality, humbly setting forth that since the introduction of this mode their respective ladies had, instead of bestowing on them their cast gowns, cut them into shreds, and mixed them with the cordage and buckram, to complete the stiffening of their under-petticoats. For which, and sundry other reasons, I pronounced the petticoat a forfeiture; but to show that I did not make that judgment for the sake of filthy lucre, I ordered it to be folded up, and sent it as a present to a widow gentlewoman who has five daughters, desiring she would make each of them a petticoat out of it, and send me back the remainder, which I design to cut into stomachers, caps, facings

of my waistcoat sleeves, and other garnitures suitable to my age and quality.

I would not be understood that, while I discard this monstrous invention, I am an enemy to the proper ornaments of the fair sex. On the contrary, as the hand of nature has poured on them such a profusion of charms and graces, and sent them into the world more amiable and finished than the rest of her works; so I would have them bestow upon themselves all the additional beauties that art can supply them with, provided it does not interfere with, disguise, or pervert those of nature.

I consider woman as a beautiful romantic animal, that may be adorned with furs and feathers, pearls and diamonds, ores and silks. The lynx shall cast its skin at her feet to make her a tippet; the peacock, parrot, and swan shall pay contributions to her muff; the sea shall be searched for shells, and the rocks for gems; and every part of nature furnish out its share towards the embellishment of a creature that is the most consummate work of it. All this I shall indulge them in; but as for the petticoat I have been speaking of, I neither can nor will allow it.

*The Tatler*, No. 116.

Thursday, January 5, 1709.



## VII

*The Wonders of the Microcosm**In tenui labor.*—VIRG.*Sheer Lane, January 11.*

I HAVE lately applied myself with much satisfaction to the curious discoveries that have been made by the help of microscopes, as they are related by authors of our own and other nations. There is a great deal of pleasure in prying into this world of wonders, which nature has laid out of sight, and seems industrious to conceal from us. Philosophy had ranged over all the visible creation, and began to want objects for her inquiries, when the present age, by the invention of glasses, opened a new and inexhaustible magazine of rarities, more wonderful and amazing than any of those which astonished our forefathers. I was yesterday amusing myself with speculations of this kind, and reflecting upon myriads of animals that swim in those little seas of juices that are contained in the several vessels of an human body. While my mind was thus filled with that secret wonder and delight, I could not but look upon myself as in an act of devotion, and am very well pleased with the thought of a great heathen anatomist, who calls his description of the parts of an human body, "An Hymn to the Supreme Being." The reading of the day produced in my imagination an agreeable morning's dream, if I may call it such; for I

am still in doubt whether it passed in my sleeping or waking thoughts. However it was, I fancied that my good genius stood at my bed's head, and entertained me with the following discourse ; for upon my rising, it dwelt so strongly upon me, that I writ down the substance of it, if not the very words.

"If," said he, "you can be so transported with those productions of nature which are discovered to you by those artificial eyes that are the works of human invention, how great will your surprise be, when you shall have it in your power to model your own eye as you please, and adapt it to the bulk of objects which, with all these helps, are by infinite degrees too minute for your perception ? We, who are unbodied spirits, can sharpen our sight to what degree we think fit, and make the least work of the creation distinct and visible. This gives us such ideas as cannot possibly enter into your present conceptions. There is not the least particle of matter which may not furnish one of us sufficient employment for a whole eternity. We can still divide it, and still open it, and still discover new wonders of Providence, as we look into the different texture of its parts, and meet with beds of vegetables, mineral and metallic mixtures, and several kinds of animals that lie hid, and as it were lost, in such an endless fund of matter. I find you are surprised at this discourse ; but as your reason tells you there are infinite parts in the smallest portion of matter, it will likewise convince you, that there is as great a variety of secrets, and as much room for discoveries, in a particle no bigger

than the point of a pin, as in the globe of the whole earth. Your microscopes bring to sight shoals of living creatures in a spoonful of vinegar ; but we, who can distinguish them in their different magnitudes, see among them several huge Leviathans, that terrify the little fry of animals about them, and take their pastime as in an ocean or the great deep." I could not but smile at this part of his relation, and told him, I doubted not but he could give me the history of several invisible giants, accompanied with their respective dwarfs, in case that any of these little beings are of an human shape. " You may assure yourself," said he, " that we see in these little animals different natures, instincts, and modes of life, which correspond to what you observe in creatures of bigger dimensions. We descry millions of species subsisted on a green leaf, which your glasses represent only in crowds and swarms. What appears to your eye but as hair or down rising on the surface of it, we find to be woods and forests, inhabited by beasts of prey, that are as dreadful in those their little haunts as lions and tigers in the deserts of Libya." I was much delighted with his discourse, and could not forbear telling him, that I should be wonderfully pleased to see a natural history of imperceptibles, containing a true account of such vegetables and animals as grow and live out of sight. " Such disquisitions," answered he, " are very suitable to reasonable creatures ; and you may be sure, there are many curious spirits among us who employ themselves in such amusements. For as our hands, and all our senses, may be formed to what degree

of strength and delicacy we please, in the same manner as our sight, we can make what experiments we are inclined to, how small soever the matter be in which we make them. I have been present at the dissection of a mite, and have seen the skeleton of a flea. I have been shown a forest of numberless trees, which has been picked out of an acorn. Your microscope can show you in it a complete oak in miniature ; and could you suit all your organs as we do, you might pluck an acorn from this little oak, which contains another tree ; and so proceed from tree to tree, as long as you would think fit to continue your disquisitions. It is almost impossible," added he, "to talk of things so remote from common life, and the ordinary notions which mankind receive from blunt and gross organs of sense, without appearing extravagant and ridiculous. You have often seen a dog opened, to observe the circulation of the blood, or make any other useful inquiry ; and yet would be tempted to laugh if I should tell you, that a circle of much greater philosophers than any of the Royal Society were present at the cutting up of one of those little animals, which we find in the blue of a plum ; that it was tied down alive before them ; and that they observed the palpitations of the heart, the course of the blood, the working of the muscles, and the convulsions in the several limbs, with great accuracy and improvement." "I must confess," said I, "for my own part, I go along with you in all your discoveries with great pleasure ; but it is certain, they are too fine for the gross of mankind, who are more struck with the descrip-

tion of everything that is great and bulky. Accordingly we find the best judge of human nature setting forth his wisdom, not in the formation of these minute animals, though indeed no less wonderful than the other, but in that of the leviathan and behemoth, the horse and the crocodile." "Your observation," said he, "is very just; and I must acknowledge, for my own part, that although it is with much delight that I see the traces of Providence in these instances, I still take greater pleasure in considering the works of the creation in their immensity than in their minuteness. For this reason, I rejoice when I strengthen my sight so as to make it pierce into the most remote spaces, and take a view of these heavenly bodies which lie out of the reach of human eyes, though assisted by telescopes. What you look upon as one confused white in the Milky Way appears to me a long tract of heavens, distinguished by stars that are ranged in proper figures and constellations. While you are admiring the sky in a starry night, I am entertained with a variety of worlds and suns placed one above another, and rising up to such an immense distance, that no created eye can see an end of them." "

The latter part of his discourse flung me into such an astonishment, that he had been silent for some time before I took notice of it; when on a sudden I started up and drew my curtains, to look if any one was near me, but saw nobody, and cannot tell, to this moment, whether it was my good genius or a dream that left me.

## VIII

*The Vision of Love*

*Velut silvis, ubi passim  
Palantes error certo de tramite pellit ;  
Ille sinistrorsum, hic dextrorsum abit.*—HOR.

*Sheer Lane, January 13.*

INSTEAD of considering any particular passion or character in any one set of men, my thoughts were last night employed on the contemplation of human life in general ; and truly it appears to me, that the whole species are hurried on by the same desires, and engaged in the same pursuits, according to the different stages and divisions of life. Youth is devoted to lust, middle age to ambition, old age to avarice. These are the three general motives and principles of action both in good and bad men ; though it must be acknowledged that they change their names, and refine their natures, according to the temper of the person whom they direct and animate. For with the good, lust becomes virtuous love ; ambition, true honour ; and avarice, the care of posterity. This scheme of thought amused me very agreeably till I retired to rest, and afterwards formed itself into a pleasing and regular vision, which I shall describe in all its circumstances, as the objects presented themselves, whether in a serious or ridiculous manner.

I dreamed that I was in a wood, of so prodigious an

extent, and cut into such a variety of walks and alleys, that all mankind were lost and bewildered in it. After having wandered up and down some time, I came into the centre of it, which opened into a wide plain, filled with multitudes of both sexes. I here discovered three great roads, very wide and long, that led into three different parts of the forest. On a sudden, the whole multitude broke into three parts, according to their different ages, and marched in their respective bodies into the three great roads that lay before them. As I had a mind to know how each of these roads terminated, and whither it would lead those who passed through them, I joined myself with the assembly that were in the flower and vigour of their age, and called themselves "The Band of Lovers." I found, to my great surprise, that several old men besides myself had intruded into this agreeable company; as I had before observed, there were some young men who had united themselves to the band of misers, and were walking up the path of Avarice; though both made a very ridiculous figure, and were as much laughed at by those they joined as by those they forsook. The walk which we marched up, for thickness of shades, embroidery of flowers, and melody of birds, with the distant purling of streams, and falls of water, was so wonderfully delightful, that it charmed our senses and intoxicated our minds with pleasure. We had not been long here, before every man singled out some woman to whom he offered his addresses, and professed himself a lover; when on a sudden we perceived this delicious walk to grow more

narrow as we advanced in it, till it ended in many intricate thickets, mazes, and labyrinths, that were so mixed with roses and brambles, brakes of thorns and beds of flowers, rocky paths and pleasing grottoes, that it was hard to say whether it gave greater delight or perplexity to those who travelled in it.

It was here that the lovers began to be eager in their pursuits. Some of their mistresses, who only seemed to retire for the sake of form and decency, led them into plantations that were disposed into regular walks; where, after they had wheeled about in some turnings and windings, they suffered themselves to be overtaken, and gave their hands to those who pursued them. Others withdrew from their followers into little wildernesses, where there were so many paths interwoven with each other in so much confusion and irregularity, that several of the lovers quitted the pursuit, or broke their hearts in the chase. It was sometimes very odd to see a man pursuing a fine woman that was following another, whose eye was fixed upon a fourth, that had her own game in view in some other quarter of the wilderness. I could not but observe two things in this place which I thought very particular, that several persons who stood only at the end of the avenues, and cast a careless eye upon the nymphs during their whole flight, often caught them, when those who pressed them the most warmly through all their turns and doubles, were wholly unsuccessful: and that some of my own age, who were at first looked upon with aversion and contempt, by being well acquainted with the



wilderness, and by dodging their women in the particular corners and alleys of it, caught them in their arms, and took them from those whom they really loved and admired. There was a particular grove, which was called "The Labyrinth of Coquettes"; where many were enticed to the chase, but few returned with purchase. It was pleasant enough to see a celebrated beauty, by smiling upon one, casting a glance upon another, beckoning to a third, and adapting her charms and graces to the several follies of those that admired her, drawing into the labyrinth a whole pack of lovers, that lost themselves in the maze, and never could find their way out of it. However, it was some satisfaction to me to see many of the fair ones, who had thus deluded their followers, and left them among the intricacies of the labyrinth, obliged, when they came out of it, to surrender to the first partner that offered himself. I now had crossed over all the difficult and perplexed passages that seemed to bound our walk, when on the other side of them I saw the same great road running on a little way till it was terminated by two beautiful temples. I stood here for some time, and saw most of the multitude, who had been dispersed amongst the thickets, coming out two by two, and marching up in pairs towards the temples that stood before us. The structure on the right hand was (as I afterwards found) consecrated to Virtuous Love, and could not be entered but by such as received a ring, or some other token, from a person who was placed as a guard at the gate of it. He wore a garland of roses and

myrtles on his head, and on his shoulders a robe like an imperial mantle, white and unspotted all over, excepting only that, where it was clasped at his breast, there were two golden turtle doves that buttoned it by their bills, which were wrought in rubies. He was called by the name of Hymen, and was seated near the entrance of the temple, in a delicious bowor, made up of several trees, that were embraced by woodbines, jessamines, and amaranths, which were so many emblems of marriage, and ornaments to the trunks that supported them. As I was single and unaccompanied, I was not permitted to enter the temple, and for that reason am a stranger to all the mysteries that were performed in it. I had, however, the curiosity to observe how the several couples that entered were disposed of; which was after the following manner. There were two great gates on the back-side of the edifice, at which the whole crowd was let out. At one of these gates were two women, extremely beautiful, though in a different kind, the one having a very careful and composed air, the other a sort of smile and ineffable sweetness in her countenance. The name of the first was Discretion, and of the other Complacency. All who came out of this gate, and put themselves under the direction of these two sisters, were immediately conducted by them into gardens, groves, and meadows, which abounded in delights, and were furnished with everything that could make them the proper seats of happiness. The second gate of this temple let out all the couples that were unhappily married, who came out linked together with chains,

which each of them strove to break, but could not. Several of these were such as had never been acquainted with each other, before they met in the great walk, or had been too well acquainted in the thicket. The entrance to this gate was possessed by three sisters, who joined themselves with these wretches, and occasioned most of their miseries. The youngest of the sisters was known by the name of Levity, who, with the innocence of a virgin, had the dress and behaviour of a harlot. The name of the second was Contention, who bore on her right arm a muff made of the skin of a porcupine ; and on her left carried a little lap-dog, that barked and snapped at every one that passed by her.

The eldest of the sisters, who seemed to have a haughty and imperious air, was always accompanied with a tawny Cupid, who generally marched before her with a little mace on his shoulder, the end of which was fashioned into the horns of a stag. Her garments were yellow, and her complexion pale. Her eyes were piercing, but had odd casts in them, and that particular distemper which makes persons who are troubled with it see objects double. Upon inquiry, I was informed that her name was Jealousy.

Having finished my observations upon this temple and its votaries, I repaired to that which stood on the left hand, and was called " The Temple of Lust." The front of it was raised on Corinthian pillars, with all the meretricious ornaments that accompany that order ; whereas that of the other was composed of the chaste and matron-like Ionic. The sides of it were adorned

with several grotesque figures of goats, sparrows, heathen gods, satyrs, and monsters made up of half-man half-beast. The gates were unguarded, and open to all that had a mind to enter. Upon my going in, I found the windows were blinded, and let in only a kind of twilight, that served to discover a prodigious number of dark corners and apartments, into which the whole temple was divided. I was here stunned with a mixed noise of clamour and jollity ; on one side of me, I heard singing and dancing ; on the other, brawls and clashing of swords. In short, I was so little pleased with the place that I was going out of it ; but found I could not return by the gate where I entered, which was barred against all that were come in, with bolts of iron and locks of adamant. There was no going back from this temple through the paths of pleasure which led to it : all who passed through the ceremonies of the place went out at an iron wicket, which was kept by a dreadful giant called Remorse, that held a scourge of scorpions in his hand, and drove them into the only outlet from that temple. This was a passage so rugged, so uneven, and choked with so many thorns and briars that it was a melancholy spectacle to behold the pains and difficulties which both sexes suffered who walked through it. The men, though in the prime of their youth, appeared weak and enfeebled with old age : the women wrung their hands, and tore their hair ; and several lost their limbs before they could extricate themselves out of the perplexities of the path in which they were engaged. The remaining part of this vision, and

the adventures I met with in the two great roads of Ambition and Avarice, must be the subject of another paper.

*The Tatler*, No. 120.

Saturday, January 14, 1709.

## IX

### *The Wine-Brewers*

—*Scelus est jugulare Falernum,  
Et dare Campano toxica sæva mero.*—MART.

*Sheer Lane, February 8.*

THERE is in this city a certain fraternity of chymical operators, who work under ground in holes, caverns, and dark retirements, to conceal their mysteries from the eyes and observation of mankind. These subterraneous philosophers are daily employed in the transmutation of liquors, and, by the power of magical drugs and incantations, raising under the streets of London the choicest products of the hills and valleys of France. They can squeeze Bourdeaux out of the sloe, and draw Champagne from an apple. Virgil, in that remarkable prophecy,

*Incultisque rubens pendebit sentibus uva,  
The ripening grape shall hang on every thorn,*

seems to have hinted at this art, which can turn a plantation of northern hedges into a vineyard. These adepts are known among one another by the name of wine-brewers, and, I am afraid, do great injury, not only

to her Majesty's customs, but to the bodies of many of her good subjects.

Having received sundry complaints against these invisible workmen, I ordered the proper officer of my court to ferret them out of their respective caves, and bring them before me, which was yesterday executed accordingly.

The person who appeared against them was a merchant, who had by him a great magazine of wines that he had laid in before the war : but these gentlemen (as he said) had so vitiated the nation's palate, that no man could believe his to be French, because it did not taste like what they sold for such. As a man never pleads better than where his own personal interest is concerned, he exhibited to the court, with great eloquence, that this new corporation of druggists had inflamed the bills of mortality, and puzzled the college of physicians with diseases, for which they neither knew a name or cure. He accused some of giving all their customers cholics and megrims ; and mentioned one who had boasted, he had a tun of claret by him, that in a fortnight's time should give the gout to a dozen of the healthfullest men in the city, provided that their constitutions were prepared for it by wealth and idleness. He then enlarged, with a great show of reason, upon the prejudice which these mixtures and compositions had done to the brains of the English nation ; as is too visible, said he, from many late pamphlets, speeches, and sermons, as well as from the ordinary conversations of the youth of this age. He then quoted an ingenious

person, who would undertake to know by a man's writings, the wine he most delighted in ; and on that occasion named a certain satirist, whom he had discovered to be the author of a lampoon, by the manifest taste of the sloe, which showed itself in it by much roughness and little spirit.

In the last place, he ascribed to the unnatural tumults and fermentations which these mixtures raise in our blood, the divisions, heats, and animosities that reign among us ; and, in particular, asserted most of the modern enthusiasms and agitations to be nothing else but the effects of adulterated port.

The counsel for the brewers had a face so extremely inflamed and illuminated with carbuncles, that I did not wonder to see him an advocate for these sophistications. His rhetoric was likewise such as I should have expected from the common draught, which I found he often drank to a great excess. Indeed, I was so surprised at his figure and parts, that I ordered him to give me a taste of his usual liquor ; which I had no sooner drank, but I found a pimple rising in my forehead ; and felt such a sensible decay in my understanding, that I would not proceed in the trial till the fume of it was entirely dissipated.

This notable advocate had little to say in the defence of his clients, but that they were under a necessity of making claret, if they would keep open their doors, it being the nature of mankind to love everything that is prohibited. He further pretended to reason, that it might be as profitable to the nation to make French

wine as French hats; and concluded with the great advantage that this practice had already brought to part of the kingdom. Upon which he informed the court, that the lands in Herefordshire were raised two years' purchase since the beginning of the war.

When I had sent out my summons to these people, I gave at the same time orders to each of them to bring the several ingredients he made use of in distinct phials, which they had done accordingly, and ranged them into two rows on each side of the court. The workmen were drawn up in ranks behind them. The merchant informed me, that in one row of phials were the several colours they dealt in, and in the other the tastes. He then showed me, on the right hand, one who went by the name of Tom Tintoret, who (as he told me) was the greatest master in his colouring of any vintner in London. To give me a proof of his art, he took a glass of fair water, and by the infusion of three drops out of one of his phials, converted it into a most beautiful pale Burgundy. Two more of the same kind heightened it into a perfect Languedoc: from thence it passed into a florid Hermitage; and after having gone through two or three other changes, by the addition of a single drop, ended in a very deep Pontac. This ingenious virtuoso, seeing me very much surprised at his art, told me, that he had not an opportunity of showing it in perfection, having only made use of water for the groundwork of his colouring; but that if I were to see an operation upon liquors of stronger bodies, the art would appear to a much greater advantage. He added, that



he doubted not but it would please my curiosity to see the cider of one apple take only a vermillion, when another, with a less quantity of the same infusion, would rise into a dark purple, according to the different texture of parts in the liquor. He informed me also, that he could hit the different shades and degrees of red, as they appear in the pink and the rose, the clove and the carnation, as he had Rhenish or Moselle, Perry or White Port, to work in.

I was so satisfied with the ingenuity of this virtuoso, that, after having advised him to quit so dishonest a profession, I promised him, in consideration of his great genius, to recommend him as a partner to a friend of mine, who has heaped up great riches, and is a scarlet dyer.

The artists on my other hand were ordered, in the second place, to make some experiments of their skill before me: upon which the famous Harry Sippet stepped out, and asked me, what I would be pleased to drink? At the same time he filled out three or four white liquors in a glass, and told me, that it should be what I pleased to call for; adding very learnedly, that the liquor before him was as the naked substance or first matter of his compound, to which he and his friend, who stood over against him, could give what accidents or form they pleased. Finding him so great a philosopher, I desired he would convey into it the qualities and essence of right Bourdeaux. "Coming, coming, sir," said he, with the air of a dratwer; and after having cast his eye on the several tastes and

flavours that stood before him, he took up a little cruet that was filled with a kind of inky juice, and pouring some of it out into the glass of white wine, presented it to me, and told me, this was the wine over which most of the business of the last term had been dispatched. I must confess, I looked upon that sooty drug, which he held up in his cruet, as the quintessence of English Bourdeaux, and therefore desired him to give me a glass of it by itself, which he did with great unwillingness. My cat at that time sat by me upon the elbow of my chair ; and as I did not care for making the experiment upon myself, I reached it to her to sip of it, which had like to have cost her her life ; for notwithstanding it flung her at first into freakish tricks, quite contrary to her usual gravity, in less than a quarter of an hour she fell into convulsions ; and, had it not been a creature more tenacious of life than any other, would certainly have died under the operation.

I was so incensed by the tortures of my innocent domestic, and the unworthy dealings of these men, that I told them, if each of them had as many lives as the injured creature before them, they deserved to forfeit them for the pernicious arts which they used for their profit. I therefore bid them look upon themselves as no better than a kind of assassins and murderers within the law. However, since they had dealt so clearly with me, and laid before me their whole practice, I dismissed them for that time ; with a particular request, that they would not poison any of my friends

and acquaintance, and take to some honest livelihood without loss of time.

For my own part, I have resolved hereafter to be very careful in my liquors; and have agreed with a friend of mine in the army, upon their next march, to secure me two hogsheads of the best stomach-wine in the cellars of Versailles, for the good of my lucubrations, and the comfort of my old age.

*The Tatler*, No. 131.

Thursday, February 9, 1709.

## X

### *The Eloquence of Silence*

*Dum tacent, clamant.*—TULL.

*Sheer Lane, February 13.*

SILENCE is sometimes more significant and sublime than the most noble and most expressive eloquence, and is on many occasions the indication of a great mind. Several authors have treated of silence as a part of duty and discretion, but none of them have considered it in this light. Homer compares the noise and clamour of the Trojans advancing towards the enemy, to the cackling of cranes when they invade an army of pygmies. On the contrary, he makes his countrymen and favourites, the Greeks, move forward in a regular determined march, and in the depth of silence. I find, in the accounts which are given us of some of the more eastern nations, where the inhabitants are disposed by their

constitutions and climates to higher strains of thought and more elevated raptures than what we feel in the northern regions of the world, that silence is a religious exercise among them. For when their public devotions are in the greatest fervour, and their hearts lifted up as high as words can raise them, there are certain suspensions of sound and motion for a time, in which the mind is left to itself, and supposed to swell with such secret conceptions as are too big for utterance. I have myself been wonderfully delighted with a masterpiece of music, when in the very tumult and ferment of their harmony, all the voices and instruments have stopped short on a sudden, and after a little pause recovered themselves again as it were, and renewed the concert in all its parts. Methought this short interval of silence has had more music in it than any the same space of time before or after it. There are two instances of silence in the two greatest poets that ever wrote, which have something in them as sublime as any of the speeches in their whole works. The first is that of Ajax, in the eleventh book of the *Odyssey*. Ulysses, who had been the rival of this great man in his life, as well as the occasion of his death, upon meeting his shade in the region of departed heroes, makes his submission to him with an humility next to adoration, which the other passes over with dumb sullen majesty, and such a silence as (to use the words of Longinus) had more greatness in it than anything he could have spoken.

The next instance I shall mention is in Virgil, where

the poet, doubtless, imitates this silence of Ajax in that of Dido ; though I do not know that any of his commentators have taken notice of it. Æneas, finding, among the shades of despairing lovers, the ghost of her who had lately died for him, with the wound still fresh upon her, addresses himself to her with expanded arms, floods of tears, and the most passionate professions of his own innocence as to what had happened ; all which Dido receives with the dignity and disdain of a resenting lover and an injured queen ; and is so far from vouchsafing him an answer, that she does not give him a single look. The poet represents her as turning away her face from him while he spoke to her ; and after having kept her eyes for some time upon the ground, as one that heard and contemned his protestations, flying from him into the grove of myrtle, and into the arms of another, whose fidelity had deserved her love.

I have often thought our writers of tragedy have been very defective in this particular, and that they might have given great beauty to their works by certain stops and pauses in the representation of such passions as it is not in the power of language to express. There is something like this in the last act of *Venice Preserved*, where Pierre is brought to an infamous execution, and begs of his friend, as a reparation for past injuries, and the only favour he could do him, to rescue him from the ignominy of the wheel by stabbing him. As he is going to make this dreadful request, he is not able to communicate it, but withdraws his face from his friend's

ear and bursts into tears. The melancholy silence that follows hereupon, and continues till he has recovered himself enough to reveal his mind to his friend, raises in the spectators a grief that is inexpressible, and an idea of such a complicated distress in the actor as words cannot utter. It would look as ridiculous to many readers to give rules and directions for proper silences as for "penning a whisper"; but it is certain that in the extremity of most passions, particularly surprise, admiration, astonishment, nay, rage itself, there is nothing more graceful than to see the play stand for a few moments, and the audience fixed in an agreeable suspense during the silence of a skilful actor.

But silence never shows itself to so great an advantage as when it is made the reply to calumny and defamation, provided that we give no just occasion for them. We might produce an example of it in the behaviour of one in whom it appeared in all its majesty, and one whose silence, as well as his person, was altogether divine. When one considers this subject only in its sublimity, this great instance could not but occur to me; and since I only make use of it to show the highest example of it, I hope I do not offend in it. To forbear replying to an unjust reproach, and overlook it with a generous or, if possible, with an entire neglect of it, is one of the most heroic acts of a great mind; and I must confess, when I reflect upon the behaviour of some of the greatest men in antiquity, I do not so much admire them that they deserved the praise of the

whole age they lived in, as because they contemned the envy and detraction of it.

All that is incumbent on a man of worth, who suffers under so ill a treatment, is to lie by for some time in silence and obscurity, till the prejudice of the times be over, and his reputation cleared. I have often read, with a great deal of pleasure, a legacy of the famous Lord Bacon, one of the greatest geniuses that our own or any country has produced. After having bequeathed his soul, body, and estate in the usual form, he adds, "My name and memory I leave to foreign nations, and to my countrymen; after some time be passed over."

At the same time that I recommend this philosophy to others, I must confess I am so poor a proficient in it myself, that if in the course of my lucubrations it happens, as it has done more than once, that my paper is duller than in conscience it ought to be, I think the time an age till I have an opportunity of putting out another, and growing famous again for two days.

I must not close my discourse upon silence without informing my reader that I have by me an elaborate treatise on the aposiopesis called an *Et caetera*, it being a figure much used by some learned authors, and particularly by the great Littleton, who, as my Lord Chief Justice Coke observes, had a most admirable talent at an &c.

## XI

*The Newsmonger*

—*Aliena negotia curat* \*  
*Excussus propriis.*— HOR.

*From my own Apartment, April 5.*

THERE lived some years since within my neighbourhood a very grave person, an upholsterer, who seemed a man of more than ordinary application to business. He was a very early riser, and was often abroad two or three hours before any of his neighbours. He had a particular carefulness in the knitting of his brows, and a kind of impatience in all his motions, that plainly discovered he was always intent on matters of importance. Upon my inquiry into his life and conversation I found him to be the greatest newsmonger in our quarter ; that he rose before day to read the *Postman* ; and that he would take two or three turns to the other end of the town before his neighbours were up, to see if there were any Dutch mails come in. He had a wife and several children ; but was much more inquisitive to know what passed in Poland than in his own family, and was in greater pain and anxiety of mind for King Augustus's welfare than that of his nearest relations. He looked extremely thin in a dearth of news, and never enjoyed himself in a westerly wind. This indefatigable kind of life was the ruin of his shop : for about the time that his favourite prince left the crown of Poland, he broke and disappeared.



This man and his affairs had been long out of mind, till about three days ago, as I was walking in St. James's Park, I heard somebody at a distance hemming after me; and who should it be but my old neighbour the upholsterer? I saw he was reduced to extreme poverty, by certain shabby superfluities in his dress: for, notwithstanding that it was a very sultry day for the time of year, he wore a loose great-coat and a muff, with a long campaign-wig out of curl; to which he had added the ornament of a pair of black garters buckled under the knee. Upon his coming up to me I was going to inquire into his present circumstances; but was prevented by his asking me, with a whisper, whether the last letters brought any accounts that one might rely upon from Bender?<sup>1</sup> I told him, none that I heard of; and asked him, whether he had yet married his eldest daughter? He told me, no. "But pray," says he, "tell me sincerely, what are your thoughts of the king of Sweden?" For though his wife and children were starving, I found his chief concern at present was for this great monarch. I told him that I looked upon him as one of the first heroes of the age. "But pray," says he, "do you

<sup>1</sup> After being severely defeated by the Russians at Pultowa, in July 1709, Charles XII. of Sweden took refuge with the Turks and resided for a time under their protection at Bender in Bessarabia. Some months before the battle the king had been wounded by a shot in the heel, which disabled him from riding on horseback at the decisive engagement. These events are described in detail by Voltaire in his fascinating *History of Charles the Twelfth*, a work based to some extent on the testimony of eye-witnesses. The wound in the heel is alluded to by Addison a few lines lower down.

think there is anything in the story of his wound ? ” and finding me surprised at the question, “ Nay,” says he, “ I only propose it to you.” I answered that I thought there was no reason to doubt of it. “ But why in the heel,” says he, “ more than in any other part of the body ? ” “ Because,” says I, “ the bullet chanced to light there.”

This extraordinary dialogue was no sooner ended, but he began to launch out into a long dissertation upon the affairs of the North ; and after having spent some time on them, he told me he was in a great perplexity how to reconcile the *Supplement* with the *English Post*, and had been just now examining what the other papers say upon the same subject. “ The *Daily Courant*,” says he, “ has these words, ‘ We have advices from very good hands that a certain prince has some matters of great importance under consideration.’ This is very mysterious ; but the *Post-boy* leaves us more in the dark, for he tells us, ‘ That there are private intimations of measures taken by a certain prince, which time will bring to light.’ Now the *Postman*,” says he, “ who uses to be very clear, refers to the same news in these words : ‘ The late conduct of a certain prince affords great matter of speculation.’ This certain prince,” says the upholsterer, “ whom they are all so cautious of naming, I take to be——,” upon which, though there was nobody near us, he whispered something in my ear, which I did not hear, or think worth my while to make him repeat.

We were now got to the upper end of the Mall, where

were three or four very odd fellows sitting together upon the bench. These I found were all of them politicians, who used to sun themselves in that place every day about dinner-time. Observing them to be curiosities in their kind, and my friend's acquaintance, I sat down among them.

The chief politician of the bench was a great asserter of paradoxes. He told us, with a seeming concern, that by some news he had lately read from Muscovy, it appeared to him that there was a storm gathering in the Black Sea, which might in time do hurt to the naval forces of this nation. To this he added, that for his part, he could not wish to see the Turk driven out of Europe, which he believed could not but be prejudicial to our woollen manufacture. He then told us that he looked upon those extraordinary revolutions which had lately happened in those parts of the world to have risen chiefly from two persons who were not much talked of; "and those," says he, "are Prince Menzikoff and the Duchess of Mirandola." He backed his assertions with so many broken hints, and such a show of depth and wisdom, that we gave ourselves up to his opinions.

The discourse at length fell upon a point which seldom escapes a knot of true-born Englishmen, whether in case of a religious war the Protestants would not be too strong for the Papists? This we unanimously determined on the Protestant side. One who sat on my right hand, and, as I found by his discourse, had been in the West Indies, assured us that it would be a very easy matter for the Protestants to beat the Pope at sea;

and added, that whenever such a war does break out, it must turn to the good of the Leeward Islands. Upon this, one who sat at the end of the bench, and, as I afterwards found, was the geographer of the company, said, that in case the Papists should drive the Protestants from these parts of Europe, when the worst came to the worst, it would be impossible to beat them out of Norway and Greenland, provided the northern crowns hold together, and the Czar of Muscovy stand neuter.

He further told us, for our comfort, that there were vast tracts of land about the Pole, inhabited neither by Protestants nor Papists, and of greater extent than all the Roman Catholic dominions in Europe.

When we had fully discussed this point, my friend the upholsterer began to exert himself upon the present negotiations of peace, in which he deposed princes, settled the bounds of kingdoms, and balanced the power of Europe, with great justice and impartiality.

I at length took my leave of the company, and was going away ; but had not been gone thirty yards before the upholsterer hemmed again after me. Upon his advancing towards me, with a whisper, I expected to hear some secret piece of news, which he had not thought fit to communicate to the bench ; but instead of that he desired me in my ear to lend him half-a-crown. In compassion to so needy a statesman, and to dissipate the confusion I found he was in, I told him, if he pleased, I would give him five shillings, to receive five pounds of him when the Great Turk was driven

out of Constantinople ; which he very readily accepted, but not before he had laid down to me the impossibility of such an event, as the affairs of Europe now stand.

This paper I design for the particular benefit of those worthy citizens who live more in a coffee-house than in their shops, and whose thoughts are so taken up with the affairs of the allies that they forget their customers.

*The Tatler*, No. 155.

Thursday, April 6, 1710.

## XII

### *The Pedant*

*Faciunt nae intelligendo, ut nihil intelligant.*—TER.

*From my own Apartment, April 12.*

TOM FOLIO is a broker in learning, employed to get together good editions, and stock the libraries of great men. There is not a sale of books begins till Tom Folio is seen at the door. There is not an auction where his name is not heard, and that too in the very nick of time, in the critical moment, before the last decisive stroke of the hammer. There is not a subscription goes forward in which Tom is not privy to the first rough draught of the proposals ; nor a catalogue printed, that doth not come to him wet from the press. He is an universal scholar, so far as the title-page of all authors, knows the manuscripts in which they were discovered, the editions through which they have

passed, with the praises or censures which they have received from the several members of the learned world. He has a greater esteem for Aldus and Elzevir than for Virgil and Horace. If you talk of Herodotus, he breaks out into a panegyric upon Harry Stephens. He thinks he gives you an account of an author, when he tells you the subject he treats of, the name of the editor, and the year in which it was printed. Or if you draw him into further particulars, he cries up the goodness of the paper, extols the diligence of the corrector, and is transported with the beauty of the letter. This he looks upon to be sound learning and substantial criticism. As for those who talk of the fineness of style and the justness of thought, or describe the brightness of any particular passages; nay, though they themselves write in the genius and spirit of the author they admire, Tom looks upon them as men of superficial learning and flashy parts.

I had yesterday morning a visit from this learned idiot (for that is the light in which I consider every pedant), when I discovered in him some little touches of the coxcomb, which I had not before observed. Being very full of the figure which he makes in the republic of letters, and wonderfully satisfied with his great stock of knowledge, he gave me broad intimations that he did not believe in all points as his forefathers had done. He then communicated to me a thought of a certain author upon a passage of Virgil's account of the dead, which I made the subject of a late paper. This thought hath taken very much among

men of Tom's pitch and understanding, though universally exploded by all that know how to construe Virgil, or have any relish of antiquity. Not to trouble my reader with it, I found upon the whole that Tom did not believe a future state of rewards and punishments, because Aeneas, at his leaving the empire of the dead, passed through the gate of ivory, and not through that of horn. Knowing that Tom had not sense enough to give up an opinion which he had once received, that I might avoid wrangling I told him that Virgil possibly had his oversights as well as another author. "Ah! Mr. Bickerstaff," says he, "you would have another opinion of him if you would read him in Daniel Heinsius's edition. I have perused him myself several times in that edition," continued he; "and after the strictest and most malicious examination, could find but two faults in him: one of them is in the *Aeneid*, where there are two commas instead of a parenthesis; and another in the third *Georgic*, where you may find a semicolon turned upside down." "Perhaps," said I, "these were not Virgil's thoughts, but those of the transcriber." "I do not design it," says Tom, "as a reflection on Virgil: on the contrary, I know that all the manuscripts reclaim against such a punctuation. Oh! Mr. Bickerstaff," says he, "what would a man give to see one simile of Virgil writ in his own hand?" I asked him which was the simile he meant; but was answered, "Any simile in Virgil." He then told me all the secret history in the commonwealth of learning; of modern pieces that had

the names of ancient authors annexed to them ; of all the books that were now writing or printing in the several parts of Europe ; of many amendments which are made, and not yet published ; and a thousand other particulars, which I would not have my memory burdened with for a Vatican.

At length, being fully persuaded that I thoroughly admired him, and looked upon him as a prodigy of learning, he took his leave. I know several of Tom's class who are professed admirers of Tasso without understanding a word of Italian ; and one in particular, that carries a *Pastor Fido* in his pocket, in which I am sure he is acquainted with no other beauty but the clearness of the character.

There is another kind of pedant, who, with all Tom Folio's impertinencies, hath greater superstructures and embellishments of Greek and Latin, and is still more insupportable than the other, in the same degree as he is more learned. Of this kind very often are editors, commentators, interpreters, scholiasts, and critics ; and in short, all men of deep learning without common sense. These persons set a greater value on themselves for having found out the meaning of a passage in Greek than upon the author for having written it ; nay, will allow the passage itself not to have any beauty in it, at the same time that they would be considered as the greatest men of the age for having interpreted it. They will look with contempt on the most beautiful poems that have been composed by any of their contemporaries ; but will lock themselves



up in their studies for a twelvemonth together, to correct, publish, and expound such trifles of antiquity as a modern author would be contemned for. Men of the strictest morals, severest lives, and the gravest professions will write volumes upon an idle sonnet that is originally in Greek or Latin ; give editions of the most immoral authors, and spin out whole pages upon the various readings of a lewd expression. All that can be said in excuse for them is, that their works sufficiently show they have no taste of their authors ; and that what they do in this kind is out of their great learning, and not out of any levity or lasciviousness of temper.

A pedant of this nature is wonderfully well described in six lines of Boileau, with which I shall conclude his character :

*Un Pédant enivré de sa vaine science,  
Tout hérissé de Grec, tout bouffi d'arrogance,  
Et qui de mille auteurs retenus mot pour mot,  
Dans sa tête entassez n'a souvent fait qu'un sot,  
Croit qu'un livre fait tout, et que sans Aristote  
La raison ne voit goutte, et le bon sens radote.*

*The Tatler*, No. 158.

Thursday, April 13, 1710.

## XIII

*The Poetaster.*

*Idem inficeto est inficetior rure,  
 Simul poemata attigit : neque idem unquam  
 Aequè est beatus, ac poema cùm scribit :  
 Tam gaudet in se, tamque se ipse miratur.  
 Nimirum idem omnes fallimur ; neque est quisquam  
 Quem non in aliqua re videre Suffenum  
 Possis—* CATUL. de Suffeno.

*Will's Coffee-house, April 24.*

I YESTERDAY came hither about two hours before the company generally make their appearance, with a design to read over all the newspapers ; but upon my sitting down I was accosted by Ned Softly, who saw me from a corner in the other end of the room, where I found he had been writing something. “ Mr. Bickerstaff,” says he, “ I observe by a late paper of yours that you and I are just of a humour ; for you must know, of all impertinencies there is nothing which I so much hate as news. I never read a *Gazette* in my life ; and never trouble my head about our armies, whether they win or lose, or in what part of the world they lie encamped.” Without giving me time to reply, he drew a paper of verses out of his pocket, telling me that he had something which would entertain me more agreeably, and that he would desire my judgment upon every line, for that we had time enough before us till the company came in.

Ned Softly is a very pretty poet, and a great admirer of easy lines. Waller is his favourite ; and as that admirable writer has the best and worst verses of any among our great English poets, Ned Softly has got all the bad ones without book, which he repeats upon occasion, to show his reading, and garnish his conversation. Ned is indeed a true English reader, incapable of relishing the great and masterly strokes of this art ; but wonderfully pleased with the little Gothic ornaments of epigrammatical conceits, turns, points, and quibbles, which are so frequent in the most admired of our English poets, and practised by those who want genius and strength to represent, after the manner of the ancients, simplicity in its natural beauty and perfection.

Finding myself unavoidably engaged in such a conversation, I was resolved to turn my pain into a pleasure, and to divert myself as well as I could with so very odd a fellow. " You must understand," says Ned, " that the sonnet I am going to read to you was written upon a lady, who showed me some verses of her own making, and is, perhaps, the best poet of our age. But you shall hear it." Upon which he began to read as follows :

" TO MIRA ON HER INCOMPARABLE POEMS.

I.

" When dressed in laurel wreaths you shine,  
And tune your soft melodious notes,  
You seem a sister of the Nine,  
Or Phoebus' self in petticoats.

## • II.

• “ I fancy, when your song you sing  
    (Your song you sing with so much art),  
Your pen was plucked from Cupid’s wing ;  
    For ah ! it wounds me like his dart.”

“ Why,” says I, “ this is a little nosegay of conceits, a very lump of salt : every verse hath something in it that piques ; and then the dart in the last line is certainly as pretty a sting in the tail of an epigram (for so I think you critics call it) as ever entered into the thought of a poet.” “ Dear Mr. Bickerstaff,” says he, shaking me by the hand, “ everybody knows you to be a judge of these things ; and to tell you truly, I read over Roscommon’s translation of Horace’s *Art of Poetry* three several times before I sat down to write the sonnet which I have shown you. But you shall hear it again, and pray observe every line of it, for not one of them shall pass without your approbation.

‘ When dressed in laurel wreaths you shine.’

“ That is,” says he, “ when you have your garland on ; when you are writing verses.” To which I replied, “ I know your meaning : a metaphor ! ” “ The same,” said he, and went on :

“ ‘ And tune your soft melodious notes.’

“ Pray observe the gliding of that verse ; there is scarce a consonant in it. I took care to make it run upon liquids. Give me your opinion of it.” “ Truly,” said I, “ I think it as good as the former.” “ I am

very glad to hear you say so," says he, "but mind the next :

' You seem a sister of the Nine.'

"That is," says he, "you seem a sister of the Muses ; for if you look into ancient authors, you will find it was their opinion that there were nine of them." "I remember it very well," said I, "but pray proceed."

" ' Or Phoebus' self in petticoats.'

"Phoebus," says he, "was the god of poetry. These little instances, Mr. Bickerstaff, show a gentleman's reading. Then to take off from the air of learning which Phoebus and the Muses have given to this first stanza, you may observe how it falls all of a sudden into the familiar ; in petticoats !

' Or Phoebus' self in petticoats.'

"Let us now," says I, "enter upon the second stanza. I find the first line is still a continuation of the metaphor.

' I fancy when your song you sing.'

"It is very right," says he ; "but pray observe the turn of words in those two lines. I was a whole hour in adjusting of them, and have still a doubt upon me whether in the second line it should be 'Your song you sing,' or 'You sing your song.' You shall hear them both :

' I fancy when your song you sing,  
(Your song you sing with so much art),'

or,

‘ I fancy when your song you sing  
(You sing your song with so much art), ’ ”

“ Truly,” said I, “ the turn is so natural either way, that you have made me almost giddy with it.” “ Dear Sir,” said he, grasping me by the hand, “ you have a great deal of patience ; but pray what do you think of the next verse ?

‘ Your pen was plucked from Cupid’s wing.’ ”

“ Think ! ” says I, “ I think you have made Cupid look like a little goose.” “ That was my meaning,” says he, “ I think the ridicule is well enough hit off. But we come now to the last, which sums up the whole matter.

‘ For ah ! it wounds me like his dart.’ ”

“ Pray how do you like that *ah* ! doth it not make a pretty figure in that place ? *Ah* !—it looks as if I felt the dart, and cried out at being pricked with it.

‘ For ah ! it wounds me like his dart.’ ”

“ My friend Dick Easy,” continued he, “ assured me he would rather have written that *ah* ! than to have been the author of the *Aeneid*. He indeed objected that I made Mira’s pen like a quill in one of the lines, and like a dart in the other. But as to that——” “ Oh ! as to that,” says I, “ it is but supposing Cupid to be like a porcupine, and his quills and darts will be the same thing.” He was going to embrace me for the hint ; but half-a-dozen critics coming into the room, whose faces he did not like, he conveyed the sonnet into his pocket,

and whispered me in the ear, he would show it me again as soon as his man had written it over fair.

*The Tatler*, No. 163.

Tuesday, April 25, 1710.

## XIV

### *The Critic*

*From my own Apartment, April 28.*

It has always been my endeavour to distinguish between realities and appearances, and separate true merit from the pretence to it. As it shall ever be my study to make discoveries of this nature in human life, and to settle the proper distinctions between the virtues and perfections of mankind, and those false colours and resemblances of them that shine alike in the eyes of the vulgar ; so I shall be more particularly careful to search into the various merits and pretences of the learned world. This is the more necessary, because there seems to be a general combination among the pedants to extol one another's labours, and cry up one another's parts ; while men of sense, either through that modesty which is natural to them, or the scorn they have for such trifling commendations, enjoy their stock of knowledge like a hidden treasure, with satisfaction and silence. Pedantry in learning is like hypocrisy in religion, a form of knowledge without the power of it, that attracts the eyes of the common people, breaks out in noise and show, and finds its reward, not from any inward pleasure that attends it, but from

the praises and approbations which it receives from men.

Of this shallow species there is not a more importunate, empty, and conceited animal than that which is generally known by the name of a critic. This, in the common acceptation of the word, is one that, without entering into the sense and soul of an author, has a few general rules, which, like mechanical instruments, he applies to the works of every writer, and as they quadrate with them, pronounces the author perfect or defective. He is master of a certain set of words, as Unity, Style, Fire, Phlegm, Easy, Natural, Turn, Sentiment, and the like ; which he varies, compounds, divides, and throws together, in every part of his discourse, without any thought or meaning. The marks you may know him by are an elevated eye and dogmatical brow, a positive voice, and a contempt for everything that comes out, whether he has read it or not. He dwells altogether in generals. He praises or dispraises in the lump. He shakes his head very frequently at the pedantry of universities, and bursts into laughter when you mention an author that is known at Will's. He hath formed his judgment upon Homer, Horace, and Virgil, not from their own works, but from those of Rapin and Bossu. He knows his own strength so well, that he never dares praise anything in which he has not a French author for his voucher.

With these extraordinary talents and accomplishments, Sir Timothy Tittle puts men in vogue, or condemns them to obscurity, and sits as judge of life and



death upon every author that appears in public.' It is impossible to represent the pangs, agonies, and convulsions which Sir Timothy expresses in every feature of his face and muscle of his body upon the reading of a bad poet.

About a week ago I was engaged at a friend's of mine in an agreeable conversation with his wife and daughters, when, in the height of our mirth, Sir Timothy, who makes love to my friend's eldest daughter, came in amongst us puffing and blowing, as if he had been very much out of breath. He immediately called for a chair, and desired leave to sit down, without any further ceremony. I asked him, where he had been? whether he was out of order? He only replied that he was quite spent, and fell a-cursing in soliloquy. I could hear him cry, "A wicked rogue!—An execrable wretch!—Was there ever such a monster!"—The young ladies upon this began to be affrighted, and asked, whether any one had hurt him? He answered nothing, but still talked to himself. "To lay the first scene," says he, "in St. James's Park, and the last in Northamptonshire!" "Is that all?" says I. "Then I suppose you have been at the rehearsal of a play this morning." "Been!" says he; "I have been at Northampton, in the Park, in a lady's bed-chamber, in a dining-room, everywhere; the rogue has led me such a dance!"—Though I could scarce forbear laughing at his discourse, I told him I was glad it was no worse, and that he was only metaphorically weary. "In short, sir," says he, "the author has not observed a

single unity in his whole play ; the scene shifts in every dialogue ; the villain has hurried me up and down at such a rate that I am tired off my legs." I could not but observe with some pleasure that the young lady whom he made love to conceived a very just aversion towards him upon seeing him so very passionate in trifles. And as she had that natural sense which makes her a better judge than a thousand critics, she began to rally him upon this foolish humour. "For my part," says she, "I never knew a play take that was written up to your rules, as you call them." "How, madam!" says he, "is that your opinion? I am sure you have a better taste." "It is a pretty kind of magic," says she, "the poets have, to transport an audience from place to place without the help of a coach and horses. I could travel round the world at such a rate. 'Tis such an entertainment as an enchantress finds when she fancies herself in a wood, or upon a mountain, at a feast, or a solemnity ; though at the same time she has never stirred out of her cottage." "Your simile, madam," says Sir Timothy, "is by no means just." "Pray," says she, "let my similes pass without a criticism. I must confess," continued she (for I found she was resolved to exasperate him), "I laughed very heartily at the last new comedy which you found so much fault with." "But, madam," says he, "you ought not to have laughed ; and I defy any one to show me a single rule that you could laugh by." "Ought not to laugh!" says she, "pray who should hinder me?" "Madam," says he, "there are such people in the world as Rapi-

Dacier, and several others, that ought to have spoiled your mirth." "I have heard," says the young lady, "that your great critics are always very bad poets: I fancy there is as much difference between the works of one and the other, as there is between the carriage of a dancing-master and a gentleman. I must confess," continued she, "I would not be troubled with so fine a judgment as yours is; for I find you feel more vexation in a bad comedy than I do in a deep tragedy." "Madam," says Sir Timothy, "that is not my fault; they should learn the art of writing." "For my part," says the young lady, "I should think the greatest art in your writers of comedies is to please." "To please!" says Sir Timothy; and immediately fell a-laughing. "Truly," says she, "that is my opinion." Upon this he composed his countenance, looked upon his watch, and took his leave.

I hear that Sir Timothy has not been at my friend's house since this notable conference, to the great satisfaction of the young lady, who by this means has got rid of a very impertinent fop.

I must confess, I could not but observe, with a great deal of surprise, how this gentleman, by his ill-nature, folly, and affectation, had made himself capable of suffering so many imaginary pains, and looking with such a senseless severity upon the common diversions of life.

*The Tatler*, No. 165.

Saturday, April 29, 1710.

## XV

*The Tulip-grower*

*Scriptorum chorus omnis amat nemus et fugit urbes.*—HOR.

*From my own Apartment, August 30.*

I CHANCED to rise very early one particular morning this summer, and took a walk into the country to divert myself among the fields and meadows, while the green was new, and the flowers in their bloom. As at this season of the year every lane is a beautiful walk, and every hedge full of nosegays, I lost myself with a great deal of pleasure among several thickets and bushes, that were filled with a great variety of birds and an agreeable confusion of notes, which formed the pleasantest scene in the world to one who had passed a whole winter in noise and smoke. The freshness of the dews that lay upon everything about me, with the cool breath of the morning, which inspired the birds with so many delightful instincts, created in me the same kind of animal pleasure, and made my heart overflow with such secret emotions of joy and satisfaction as are not to be described or accounted for. On this occasion I could not but reflect upon a beautiful simile in Milton :

As one who long in populous city pent,  
Where houses thick, and sewers, annoy the air,  
Forth issuing on a summer's morn, to breathe  
Among the pleasant villages, and farms  
Adjoined, from each thing met conceives delight :  
The smell of grain, or tedded grass, or kine,  
Or dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound.

Those who are conversant in the writings of polite authors receive an additional entertainment from the country, as it revives in their memories those charming descriptions with which such authors do frequently abound.

I was thinking of the foregoing beautiful simile in Milton, and applying it to myself, when I observed to the windward of me a black cloud falling to the earth in long trails of rain, which made me betake myself for shelter to a house which I saw at a little distance from the place where I was walking. As I sat in the porch, I heard the voices of two or three persons, who seemed very earnest in discourse. My curiosity was raised when I heard the names of Alexander the Great and Artaxerxes ; and as their talk seemed to run on ancient heroes, I concluded there could not be any secret in it ; for which reason I thought I might very fairly listen to what they said.

After several parallels between great men, which appeared to me altogether groundless and chimerical, I was surprised to hear one say, that he valued the Black Prince more than the Duke of Vendosme. How the Duke of Vendosme should become a rival of the Black Prince, I could not conceive ; and was more startled when I heard a second affirm with great vehemence, that if the Emperor of Germany was not going off, he should like him better than either of them. He added, that though the season was so changeable, the Duke of Marlborough was in blooming beauty. I was wondering to myself from whence they

had received this odd intelligence, especially when I heard them mention the names of several other great generals, as the Prince of Hesse, and the King of Sweden, who, they said, were both running away. To which they added, what I entirely agreed with them in, that the Crown of France was very weak, but that the Marshal Villars still kept his colours. At last one of them told the company, if they would go along with him, he would show them a Chimney Sweeper and a Painted Lady in the same bed, which he was sure would very much please them. The shower which had driven them as well as myself into the house was now over; and as they were passing by me into the garden, I asked them to let me be one of their company.

The gentleman of the house told me, if I delighted in flowers, it would be worth my while; for that he believed he could show me such a blow of tulips as was not to be matched in the whole country.

I accepted the offer, and immediately found that they had been talking in terms of gardening, and that the kings and generals they had mentioned were only so many tulips, to which the gardeners, according to their usual custom, had given such high titles and appellations of honour.

I was very much pleased and astonished at the glorious show of these gay vegetables, that arose in great profusion on all the banks about us. Sometimes I considered them, with the eye of an ordinary spectator, as so many beautiful objects, varnished over with a natural gloss, and stained with such a variety of colours

as are not to be equalled in any artificial dyes or tinctures. Sometimes I considered every leaf as an elaborate piece of tissue, in which the threads and fibres were woven together into different configurations, which gave a different colouring to the light as it glanced on the several parts of the surface. Sometimes I considered the whole bed of tulips, according to the notion of the greatest mathematician and philosopher that ever lived, as a multitude of optic instruments, designed for the separating light into all those various colours of which it is composed.

I was awakened out of these my philosophical speculations by observing the company often seemed to laugh at me.\* I accidentally praised a tulip as one of the finest that I ever saw ; upon which they told me it was a common Fool's-coat. Upon that I praised a second, which it seems was but another kind of Fool's-coat. I had the same fate with two or three more ; for which reason I desired the owner of the garden to let me know which were the finest of the flowers, for that I was so unskilful in the art that I thought the most beautiful were the most valuable, and that those which had the gayest colours were the most beautiful. The gentleman smiled at my ignorance : he seemed a very plain, honest man, and a person of good sense, had not his head been touched with that distemper which Hippocrates calls the *Τυλιππομανία*, *Tulippo-Mania* ; insomuch that he would talk very rationally on any subject in the world but a tulip.

He told me, that he valued the bed of flowers

which lay before us, and was not above twenty yards in length, and two in breadth, more than he would the best hundred acres of land in England; and added, that it would have been worth twice the money it is, if a foolish cook-maid of his had not almost ruined him the last winter by mistaking a handful of tulip-roots for an heap of onions, "and by that means," says he, "made me a dish of pottage that cost me above a thousand pounds sterling." He then showed me what he thought the finest of his tulips, which I found received all their value from their rarity and oddness, and put me in mind of your great fortunes, which are not always the greatest beauties.

I have often looked upon it as a piece of happiness, that I have never fallen into any of these fantastical tastes, nor esteemed anything the more for its being uncommon and hard to be met with. For this reason, I look upon the whole country in springtime as a spacious garden, and make as many visits to a spot of daisies, or a bank of violets, as a florist does to his borders and parterres. There is not a bush in blossom within a mile of me which I am not acquainted with, nor scarce a daffodil or cowslip that withers away in my neighbourhood without my missing it. I walked home in this temper of mind through several fields and meadows with an unspeakable pleasure, not without reflecting on the bounty of Providence, which has made the most pleasing and most beautiful objects the most ordinary and most common.



## XVI

*The Ecclesiastical Thermometer*

*Insani sanus nomen ferat, æquus iniqui,  
Ultra quam satis est, virtutem si petat ipsam.*—HOR.

*From my own Apartment, September 4*

HAVING received many letters filled with compliments and acknowledgments for my late useful discovery of the political barometer, I shall here communicate to the public an account of my ecclesiastical thermometer, the latter giving as manifest prognostications of the changes and revolutions in church as the former does of those in state, and both of them being absolutely necessary for every prudent subject, who is resolved to keep what he has and get what he can.

The church thermometer, which I am now to treat of, is supposed to have been invented in the reign of Henry the Eighth, about the time when that religious prince put some to death for owning the Pope's supremacy, and others for denying transubstantiation. I do not find, however, any great use made of this instrument till it fell into the hands of a learned and vigilant priest or minister (for he frequently wrote himself both one and the other) who was some time Vicar of Bray. This gentleman lived in his vicarage to a good old age; and after having seen several successions of his neighbouring clergy either burnt or banished, departed this life with the satisfaction of having never deserted his flock,

and died Vicar of Bray. As this glass was first designed to calculate the different degrees of heat in religion, as it raged in Popery, or as it cooled and grew temperate in the Reformation, it was marked at several distances, after the manner our ordinary thermometer is to this day, viz. "extreme hot, sultry hot, very hot, hot, warm, temperate, cold, just freezing, frost, hard frost, great frost, extreme cold."

It is well known, that Toricellius, the inventor of the common weather-glass, made the experiment in a long tube which held thirty-two foot of water; and that a more modern virtuoso, finding such a machine altogether unwieldy and useless, and considering that thirty-two inches of quicksilver weighed as much as so many feet of water in a tube of the same circumference, invented that sizeable instrument which is now in use. After this manner, that I might adapt the thermometer I am now speaking of to the present constitution of our Church, as divided into "high" and "low," I have made some necessary variations both in the tube and the fluid it contains. In the first place, I ordered a tube to be cast in a planetary hour, and took care to seal it hermetically, when the sun was in conjunction with Saturn. I then took the proper precautions about the fluid, which is a compound of two very different liquors; one of them a spirit drawn out of a strong, heady wine; the other a particular sort of rock water, colder than ice, and clearer than crystal. The spirit is of a red, fiery colour, and so very apt to ferment, that unless it be mingled with a proportion of the water, or

pent up very close, it will burst the vessel that holds it, and fly up in fume and smoke. The water, on the contrary, is of such a subtle, piercing cold, that unless it be mingled with a proportion of the spirits, it will sink almost through everything that it is put into, and seems to be of the same nature as the water mentioned by Quintus Curtius, which, says the historian, could be contained in nothing but in the hoof, or (as the Oxford manuscript has it) in the skull of an ass. The thermometer is marked according to the following figure, which I set down at length, not only to give my reader a clear idea of it, but also to fill up my paper.

Ignorance.

Persecution.

Wrath.

Zeal.

CHURCH.

Moderation.

Lukewarmness.

Infidelity.

Ignorance

The reader will observe that the Church is placed in the middle point of the glass, between Zeal and Moderation, the situation in which she always flourishes, and in which every good Englishman wishes her, who is a friend to the constitution of his country. However, when it mounts to Zeal it is not amiss; and when it sinks to Moderation, is still in a most admirable temper. The worst of it is, that when once it begins to rise it

has still an inclination to ascend ; insomuch that it is apt to climb up from Zeal to Wrath, and from Wrath to Persecution, which always ends in Ignorance, and very often proceeds from it. In the same manner it frequently takes its progress through the lower half of the glass ; and when it has a tendency to fall, will gradually descend from Moderation to Lukewarmness, and from Lukewarmness to Infidelity, which very often terminates in Ignorance, and always proceeds from it.

It is a common observation, that the ordinary thermometer will be affected by the breathing of people who are in the room where it stands ; and indeed it is almost incredible to conceive how the glass I am now describing will fall by the breath of a multitude crying Popery ; or, on the contrary, how it will rise when the same multitude (as it sometimes happens) cry out in the same breath, “ The Church is in danger.”

As soon as I had finished this my glass, and adjusted it to the above-mentioned scale of religion, that I might make proper experiments with it, I carried it under my cloak to several coffee-houses, and other places of resort about this great city. At St. James’s Coffee-house the liquor stood at Moderation ; but at Will’s, to my extreme surprise, it subsided to the very lowest mark on the glass. At the Grecian it mounted but just one point higher ; at the Rainbow it still ascended two degrees ; Child’s fetched it up to Zeal, and other adjacent coffee-houses to Wrath.

It fell in the lower half of the glass as I went further into the city, till at length it settled at Modera-

tion, where it continued all the time I stayed about the 'Change, as also whilst I passed by the Bank. And here I cannot but take notice, that through the whole course of my remarks I never observed my glass to rise at the same time that the stocks did.

To complete the experiment, I prevailed upon a friend of mine, who works under me in the occult sciences, to make a progress with my glass through the whole island of Great Britain; and after his return, to present me with a register of his observations. I guessed beforehand at the temper of several places he passed through, by the characters they have had time out of mind. Thus that facetious divine, Dr. Fuller, speaking of the town of Banbury near a hundred years ago, tells us it was a place famous for cakes and zeal, which I find by my glass is true to this day, as to the latter part of this description; though I must confess it is not in the same reputation for cakes that it was in the time of that learned author; and thus of other places. In short, I have now by me, digested in an alphabetical order, all the counties, corporations, and boroughs in Great Britain, with their respective tempers, as they stand related to my thermometer. But this I shall keep to myself, because I would by no means do anything that may seem to influence any ensuing elections.

The point of doctrine which I would propagate by this my invention, is the same which was long ago advanced by that able teacher Horace, out of whom I have taken my text for this discourse: we should be

careful not to overshoot ourselves in the pursuits even of virtue. Whether zeal or moderation be the point we aim at, let us keep fire out of the one, and frost out of the other. But alas! the world is too wise to want such a precaution. The terms High Church and Low Church, as commonly used, do not so much denote a principle as they distinguish a party. They are like words of battle, that have nothing to do with their original signification, but are only given out to keep a body of men together, and to let them know friends from enemies.

I must confess, I have considered with some little attention the influence which the opinions of these great national sects have upon their practice; and do look upon it as one of the unaccountable things of our times, that multitudes of honest gentlemen, who entirely agree in their lives, should take it in their heads to differ in their religion.

*The Tatler*, No. 220.

Tuesday, September 5, 1710.

## XVII

### *The Adventures of a Shilling*

*Per varios casus, per tot discrimina rerum,  
Tendimus.* VIRG.

*From my own Apartment, November 10.*

I WAS last night visited by a friend<sup>1</sup> of mine, who has an inexhaustible fund of discourse, and never fails to

<sup>1</sup> The friend who suggested the subject of this essay was Swift. See Swift's *Journal to Stella*, Letter X. November 25,

entertain his company with a variety of thoughts and hints that are altogether new and uncommon. Whether it were in complaisance to my way of living, or his real opinion, he advanced the following paradox, that it required much greater talents to fill up and become a retired life, than a life of business. Upon this occasion he rallied very agreeably the busy men of the age, who only valued themselves for being in motion, and passing through a series of trifling and insignificant actions. In the heat of his discourse, seeing a piece of money lying on my table, "I defy," says he, "any of these active persons to produce half the adventures that this twelvepenny piece has been engaged in, were it possible for him to give us an account of his life."

My friend's talk made so odd an impression upon my mind, that soon after I was a-bed I fell insensibly into a most unaccountable reverie, that had neither moral nor design in it, and cannot be so properly called a dream as a delirium.

Methought the shilling that lay upon the table reared itself upon its edge, and turning the face towards me, opened its mouth, and in a soft silver sound gave me the following account of his life and adventures :

"I was born," says he, "on the side of a mountain, near a little village of Peru, and made a voyage to England in an ingot, under the convoy of Sir Francis Drake.

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1710: "You are mistaken in all your conjectures about the Tatlers. I have given him one or two hints, and you have heard me talk about the Shilling"; and again, Letter XI., December 9, 1710: "No, the Tatler of the Shilling was not mine, more than the hint, and two or three general heads for it."

I was, soon after my arrival, taken out of my Indian habit, refined, naturalized, and put into the British mode, with the face of Queen Elizabeth on one side, and the arms of the country on the other. Being thus equipped, I found in me a wonderful inclination to ramble, and visit all the parts of the new world into which I was brought. The people very much favoured my natural disposition, and shifted me so fast from hand to hand, that before I was five years old I had travelled into almost every corner of the nation. But in the beginning of my sixth year, to my unspeakable grief, I fell into the hands of a miserable old fellow, who clapped me into an iron chest, where I found five hundred more of my own quality who lay under the same confinement. The only relief we had was to be taken out and counted over in the fresh air every morning and evening. After an imprisonment of several years we heard somebody knocking at our chest, and breaking it open with a hammer. This we found was the old man's heir, who, as his father lay a-dying, was so good as to come to our release: he separated us that very day. What was the fate of my companions I know not; as for myself, I was sent to the apothecary's shop for a pint of sack. The apothecary gave me to an herb-woman, the herb-woman to a butcher, the butcher to a brewer, and the brewer to his wife, who made a present of me to a nonconformist preacher. After this manner I made my way merrily through the world; for, as I told you before, we shillings love nothing so much as travelling. I sometimes



fetched in a shoulder of mutton, sometimes a play-book, and often had the satisfaction to treat a Templar at a twelvepenny ordinary, or carry him, with three friends, to Westminster Hall.

“ In the midst of this pleasant progress which I made from place to place, I was arrested by a superstitious old woman, who shut me up in a greasy purse, in pursuance of a foolish saying, that while she kept a Queen Elizabeth’s shilling about her, she should never be without money. I continued here a close prisoner for many months, till at last I was exchanged for eight-and-forty farthings.

“ I thus rambled from pocket to pocket till the beginning of the civil wars, when, to my shame be it spoken, I was employed in raising soldiers against the king ; for being of a very tempting breadth, a sergeant made use of me to inveigle country fellows, and list them in the service of the parliament.

“ As soon as he had made one man sure, his way was to oblige him to take a shilling of a more homely figure, and then practise the same trick upon another. Thus I continued doing great mischief to the crown, till my officer, chancing one morning to walk abroad earlier than ordinary, sacrificed me to his pleasures, and made use of me to seduce a milk-maid. This wench bent me, and gave me to her sweetheart, applying more properly than she intended the usual form of “ To my love and from my love.” This ungenerous gallant marrying her within a few days after, pawned me for a dram of brandy, and drinking me out next day,

I was beaten flat with a hammer, and again set a-running.

“After many adventures, which it would be tedious to relate, I was sent to a young spendthrift, in company with the will of his deceased father. The young fellow, who I found was very extravagant, gave great demonstrations of joy at the receiving of the will; but opening it, he found himself disinherited and cut off from the possession of a fair estate, by virtue of my being made a present to him. This put him into such a passion, that after having taken me in his hand, and cursed me, he squirmed me away from him as far as he could fling me. I chanced to light in an unfrequented place under a dead wall, where I lay undiscovered and useless, during the usurpation of Oliver Cromwell.

“About a year after the king’s return, a poor cavalier that was walking there about dinner-time fortunately cast his eye upon me, and, to the great joy of us both, carried me to a cook’s shop, where he dined upon me, and drank the king’s health. When I came again into the world I found that I had been happier in my retirement than I thought, having probably, by that means, escaped wearing a monstrous pair of breeches.<sup>1</sup>

“Being now of great credit and antiquity, I was rather looked upon as a medal than an ordinary coin; for which reason a gamester laid hold of me, and converted me to a counter, having got together some dozens of us for that use. We led a melancholy life in

<sup>1</sup> “A conceit of the people, from the disposition the arms of England and Ireland, in the Commonwealth coins.”—HURD.

his possession, being busy at those hours wherein current coin is at rest, and partaking the fate of our master, being in a few moments valued at a crown, a pound, or a sixpence, according to the situation in which the fortune of the cards placed us. I had at length the good luck to see my master break, by which means I was again sent abroad under my primitive denomination of a shilling.

“I shall pass over many other accidents of less moment, and hasten to that fatal catastrophe, when I fell into the hands of an artist, who conveyed me underground, and with an unmerciful pair of shears cut off my titles, clipped my brims, retrenched my shape, rubbed me to my inmost ring, and, in short, so spoiled and pillaged me that he did not leave me worth a groat. You may think what a confusion I was in, to see myself thus curtailed and disfigured. I should have been ashamed to have shown my head, had not all my old acquaintance been reduced to the same shameful figure, excepting some few that were punched through the belly. In the midst of this general calamity, when everybody thought our misfortune irretrievable, and our case desperate, we were thrown into the furnace together, and (as it often happens with cities rising out of a fire) appeared with greater beauty and lustre than we could ever boast of before. What has happened to me since this change of sex which you now see, I shall take some other opportunity to relate. In the meantime, I shall only repeat two adventures, as being very extraordinary, and neither of them

having ever happened to me above once in my life. The first was, my being in a poet's pocket, who was so taken with the brightness and novelty of my appearance, that it gave occasion to the finest barlesque poem in the British language, entitled from me, 'The Splendid Shilling.'<sup>1</sup> The second adventure, which I must not omit, happened to me in the year 1703, when I was given away in charity to a blind man ; but indeed this was by a mistake, the person who gave me having heedlessly thrown me into the hat among a penny-worth of farthings."

*The Tatler*, No. 249.

Saturday, November 11, 1710.

## XVIII

### *The Court of Honour*

*Scis etenim justum gemina suspendere lance  
Ancipitis librae.*

PERS.

*From my own Apartment, November 13.*

I LAST winter erected a Court of Justice for the correcting of several enormities in dress and behaviour, which are not cognizable in any other courts of this realm. The vintner's case, which I there tried, is still fresh in every man's memory. That of the petticoat gave also a general satisfaction, not to mention the more important points of the cane and perspective ; in which,

<sup>1</sup> By John Phillips.

if I did not give judgments and decrees according to the strictest rules of equity and justice, I can safely say I acted according to the best of my understanding. But as for the proceedings of that court, I shall refer my reader to an account of them, written by my secretary, which is now in the press, and will shortly be published under the title of "Lillie's Reports."

As I last year presided over a Court of Justice, it is my intention this year to set myself at the head of a Court of Honour. There is no court of this nature anywhere at present, except in France, where, according to the best of my intelligence, it consists of such only as are Marshals of that kingdom. I am likewise informed, that there is not one of that honourable board at present who has not been driven out of the field by the Duke of Marlborough; but whether this be only an accidental or a necessary qualification, I must confess I am not able to determine.

As for the Court of Honour of which I am here speaking, I intend to sit myself in it as president, with several men of honour on my right hand, and women of virtue on my left, as my assistants. The first place on the bench I have given to an old Tangereen captain with a wooden leg. The second is a gentleman of a long twisted periwig without a curl in it, a muff with very little hair upon it, and a threadbare coat with new buttons, being a person of great worth, and second brother to a man of quality. The third is a gentleman usher, extremely well read in romances, and grandson to one of the greatest wits in Germany, who was some-

time master of the ceremonies to the Duke of Wolfembutte.

As for those who sit further on my right hand, as it is usual in public courts, they are such as will fill up the number of faces upon the bench, and serve rather for ornament than use.

The chief upon my left hand are,

An old maiden lady, that preserves some of the best blood of England in her veins.

A Welsh woman of a little stature, but high spirit.

An old prude that has censured every marriage for these thirty years, and is lately wedded to a young rake.

Having thus furnished my bench, I shall establish correspondencies with the Horse Guards and the veterans of Chelsea College ; the former to furnish me with twelve men of honour as often as I shall have occasion for a grand jury, and the latter with as many good men and true for a petty jury.

As for the women of virtue, it will not be difficult for me to find them about midnight at crimp and basset.

Having given this public notice of my court, I must further add that I intend to open it on this day seven-night, being Monday the twentieth instant ; and do hereby invite all such as have suffered injuries and affronts, that are not to be redressed by the common laws of this land, whether they be short bows, cold salutations, supercilious looks, unreturned smiles, distant behaviour, or forced familiarity ; as also all such as have been aggrieved by any ambiguous expression, accidental jostle, or unkind repartee ; likewise

all such as have been defrauded of their right to the wall, tricked out of the upper end of the table, or have been suffered to place themselves in their own wrong on the back seat of the coach : these, and all of these, I do, as I above said, invite to bring in their several cases and complaints, in which they shall be relieved with all imaginable expedition.

I am very sensible, that the office I have now taken upon me will engage me in the disquisition of many weighty points that daily perplex the youth of the British nation, and therefore I have already discussed several of them for my future use ; as, How far a man may brandish his cane in telling a story without insulting his hearer ? What degree of contradiction amounts to the lie ? How a man should resent another's staring and cocking a hat in his face ? If asking pardon is an atonement for treading upon one's toes ? Whether a man may put up a box on the ear received from a stranger in the dark ? Or, whether a man of honour may take a blow of his wife ? with several other subtilties of the like nature.

For my direction in the duties of my office, I have furnished myself with a certain astrological pair of scales which I have contrived for this purpose. In one of them I lay the injuries, in the other the reparations. The first are represented by little weights made of a metal resembling iron, and the other of gold. These are not only lighter than the weights made use of in Avoirdupois, but also than such as are used in Troy weight. The heaviest of those that represent the

injuries amount but to a scruple; and decrease by so many subdivisions, that there are several imperceptible weights which cannot be seen without the help of a very fine microscope. I might acquaint my reader, that these scales were made under the influence of the sun when he was in *Libra*, and describe many signatures on the weights both of injury and reparation; but as this would look rather to proceed from an ostentation of my own art than any care for the public, I shall pass it over in silence.

*The Tatler*, No. 250.

Tuesday, November 14, 1710.

## XIX

### *Journal of the Court of Honour*

*Pietate gravem ac meritis si forte virum quem  
Conspexere, silent, arrectisque auribus astant.*—VIRG.

*From my own Apartment, November 20.*

Extract of the Journal of the Court of Honour, 1710.

*Die Lunae vicesimo Novembris, hora nona ante-  
meridiana.*

THE court being sat, an oath prepared by the Censor was administered to the assistants on his right hand, who were all sworn upon their honour. The women on his left hand took the same oath upon their reputation. Twelve gentlemen of the Horse Guards were impanelled, having unanimously chosen Mr. Alexander



Truncheon, who is their right-hand man in the troop, for their foreman in the jury. Mr. Truncheon immediately drew his sword, and holding it with the point towards his own body, presented it to the Censor. Mr. Bickerstaff received it, and after having surveyed the breadth of the blade and the sharpness of the point with more than ordinary attention, returned it to the foreman in a very graceful manner. The rest of the jury, upon the delivery of the sword to their foreman drew all of them together as one man, and saluted the bench with such an air, as signified the most resigned submission to those who commanded them, and the greatest magnanimity to execute what they should command.

Mr. Bickerstaff, after having received the compliments on his right hand, cast his eye upon the left, where the whole female jury paid their respects by a low curtsy, and by laying their hands upon their mouths. Their forewoman was a professed Platonist, that had spent much of her time in exhorting the sex to set a just value upon their persons, and to make the men know themselves.

There followed a profound silence, when at length, after some recollection, the Censor, who continued hitherto uncovered, put on his hat with great dignity; and after having composed the brims of it in a manner suitable to the gravity of his character, he gave the following charge; which was received with silence and attention, that being the only applause which he admits of, or is ever given in his presence.

“ The nature of my office, and the solemnity of this occasion, requiring that I should open my first session with a speech, I shall cast what I have to say under two principal heads :

“ Under the first, I shall endeavour to show the necessity and usefulness of this new-erected court ; and under the second, I shall give a word of advice and instruction to every constituent part of it.

“ As for the first, it is well observed by Phaedrus, an heathen poet,

*Nisi utile est quod facimur, frustra est gloria.*

Which is the same, ladies, as if I should say, ‘ It would be of no reputation for me to be president of a court which is of no benefit to the public.’ Now the advantages that may arise to the weal public from this institution will more plainly appear, if we consider what it suffers for the want of it. Are not our streets daily filled with wild pieces of justice and random penalties ? Are not crimes undetermined, and reparations disproportioned ? How often have we seen the lie punished by death, and the liar himself deciding his own cause ? nay, not only acting the judge, but the executioner ? Have we not known a box on the ear more severely accounted for than manslaughter ? In these extra-judicial proceedings of mankind an unmannerly jest is frequently as capital as a premeditated murder.

“ But the most pernicious circumstance in this case is, that the man who suffers the injury must put himself

upon the same foot of danger with him that gave it, before he can have his just revenge ; so that the punishment is altogether accidental, and may fall as well upon the innocent as the guilty. I shall only mention a case which happens frequently among the more polite nations of the world, and which I the rather mention, because both sexes are concerned in it, and which, therefore, you gentlemen and you ladies of the jury, will the rather take notice of ; I mean that great and known case of cuckoldom. Supposing the person who has suffered insults in his dearer and better half ; supposing, I say, this person should resent the injuries done to his tender wife, what is the reparation he may expect ? Why, to be used worse than his poor lady, run through the body, and left breathless upon the bed of honour. What then, will you on my right hand say, must the man do that is affronted ? Must our sides be elbowed, our shins broken ? Must the wall, or perhaps our mistress, be taken from us ? May a man knit his forehead into a frown, toss up his arm, or pish at what we say ; and must the villain live after it ? Is there no redress for injured honour ? ' Yes, gentlemen, that is the design of the judicature we have here established.

“ A Court of Conscience, we very well know, was first instituted for the determining of several points of property that were too little and trivial for the cognizance of higher courts of justice. In the same manner, our Court of Honour is appointed for the examination of several niceties and punctilios that do not pass for

wrongs in the eye of our common laws. But notwithstanding no legislators of any nation have taken into consideration these little circumstances, they are such as often lead to crimes big enough for their inspection, though they come before them too late for their redress.

“ Besides, I appeal to you, ladies [here Mr. Bickerstaff turned to his left hand], if these are not the little stings and thorns in life that make it more uneasy than its most substantial evils? Confess ingenuously, did you never lose a morning’s devotions, because you could not offer them up from the highest place of the pew? Have you not been in pain, even at a ball, because another has been taken out to dance before you? Do you love any of your friends so much as those that are below you? Or have you any favourites that walk on your right hand? You have answered me in your looks; I ask no more.

“ I come now to the second part of my discourse, which obliges me to address myself in particular to the respective members of the court, in which I shall be very brief.

“ As for you, gentlemen and ladies, my assistants and grand juries, I have made choice of you on my right hand, because I know you very jealous of your honour; and you on my left, because I know you very much concerned for the reputation of others; for which reason I expect great exactness and impartiality in your verdicts and judgments.

“ I must in the next place address myself to you,

Gentlemen of the Council : you all know, that I have not chosen you for your knowledge in the litigious parts of the law, but because you have all of you formerly fought duels, of which I have reason to think you have repented, as being now settled in the peaceable state of benchers. My advice to you is, only, that in your pleadings you will be short and expressive ; to which end you are to banish out of your discourses all synonymous terms, and unnecessary multiplications of verbs and nouns. I do moreover forbid you the use of the words *also* and *likewise* ; and must further declare, that if I catch any one among you, upon any pretence whatsoever, using the particle *or*, I shall instantly order him to be stripped of his gown and thrown over the bar."

This is a true copy,

CHARLES LILLIE.

*N.B.*—The sequel of the proceedings of this day will be published on Tuesday next.

*The Tatler*, No. 253.

Tuesday, November 21, 1710.

## XX

### *Frozen Speech*

*Splendide mendax.*—HOR.

*From my own Apartment, November 22.*

THERE are no books which I more delight in than in travels, especially those that describe remote countries,

and give the writer an opportunity of showing his parts without incurring any danger of being examined or contradicted. Among all the authors of this kind, our renowned countryman Sir John Mandeville has distinguished himself by the copiousness of his invention and the greatness of his genius. The second to Sir John I take to have been Ferdinand Mendez Pinto, a person of infinite adventure and unbounded imagination. One reads the voyages of these two great wits with as much astonishment as the travels of Ulysses in Homer, or of the Red-Cross Knight in Spenser. All is enchanted ground and fairy land.

I have got into my hands, by great chance, several manuscripts of these two eminent authors, which are filled with greater wonders than any of those they have communicated to the public; and indeed, were they not so well attested, would appear altogether improbable. I am apt to think, the ingenious authors did not publish them with the rest of their works, lest they should pass for fictions and fables: a caution not unnecessary, when the reputation of their veracity was not yet established in the world. But as this reason has now no further weight, I shall make the public a present of these curious pieces at such times as I shall find myself unprovided with other subjects.

The present paper I intend to fill with an extract of Sir John's journal, in which that learned and worthy knight gives an account of the freezing and thawing of several short speeches which he made in the territories of Nova Zembla. I need not inform my reader that

the author of *Hudibras* alludes to this strange quality in that cold climate, when, speaking of abstracted notions clothed in a visible shape, he adds that apt simile,

Like words congealed in northern air.

Not to keep my reader any longer in suspense, the relation put into modern language is as follows :

“ We were separated by a storm in the latitude of 73, insomuch that only the ship which I was in, with a Dutch and a French vessel, got safe into a creek of Nova Zembla. We landed, in order to refit our vessels and store ourselves with provisions. The crew of each vessel made themselves a cabin of turf and wood, at some distance from each other, to fence themselves against the inclemencies of the weather, which was severe beyond imagination. We soon observed that in talking to one another we lost several of our words, and could not hear one another at above two yards’ distance, and that too when we sat very near the fire. After much perplexity I found that our words froze in the air before they could reach the ears of the person to whom they were spoken. I was soon confirmed in this conjecture, when, upon the increase of the cold, the whole company grew dumb, or rather deaf ; for every man was sensible, as we afterwards found, that he spoke as well as ever ; but the sounds no sooner took air than they were condensed and lost. It was now a miserable spectacle to see us nodding and gaping at one another, every man talking, and no man heard. One might observe a seaman, that could hail a ship at a

league's distance, beckoning with his hand, straining his lungs, and tearing his throat, but all in vain.

—*Nec vox, nec verba, sequuntur.*

“We continued here three weeks in this dismal plight. At length, upon a turn of wind, the air about us began to thaw. Our cabin was immediately filled with a dry clattering sound, which I afterwards found to be the crackling of consonants that broke above our heads, and were often mixed with a gentle hissing, which I imputed to the letter S, that occurs so frequently in the English tongue. I soon after felt a breeze of whispers rushing by my ear; for those being of a soft and gentle substance, immediately liquefied in the warm wind that blew across our cabin. These were soon followed by syllables and short words, and at length by entire sentences, that melted sooner or later, as they were more or less congealed; so that we now heard everything that had been spoken during the whole three weeks that we had been silent, if I may use that expression. It was now very early in the morning, and yet, to my surprise, I heard somebody say, ‘Sir John, it is midnight, and time for the ship’s crew to go to bed.’ This I knew to be the pilot’s voice, and upon recollecting myself I concluded that he had spoken these words to me some days before, though I could not hear them before the present thaw. My reader will easily imagine how the whole crew was amazed to hear every man talking, and see no man opening his mouth. In the midst of this great surprise we were all in, we



heard a volley of oaths and curses, lasting for a long while, and uttered in a very hoarse voice, which I knew belonged to the boatswain, who was a very choleric fellow, and had taken his opportunity of 'cursing and swearing at me when he thought I could not hear him ; for I had several times given him the strappado on that account, as I did not fail to repeat it for these his pious soliloquies when I got him on shipboard.

" I must not omit the names of several beauties in Wapping, which were heard every now and then, in the midst of a long sigh that accompanied them ; as, dear Kate ! Pretty Mrs. Peggy ! When shall I see my Sue again ? This betrayed several amours which had been concealed till that time, and furnished us with a great deal of mirth in our return to England.

" When this confusion of voices was pretty well over, though I was afraid to offer at speaking, as fearing I should not be heard, I proposed a visit to the Dutch cabin, which lay about a mile further up in the country. My crew were extremely rejoiced to find they had again recovered their hearing, though every man uttered his voice with the same apprehensions that I had done :

—*Et timide verba intermissa retentat.*

" At about half a mile's distance from our cabin we heard the groanings of a bear, which at first startled us ; but upon inquiry we were informed by some of our company that he was dead, and now lay in salt, having been killed upon that very spot about a fortnight before

in the time of the frost. Not far from the same place we were likewise entertained with some posthumous snarls and barkings of a fox.

“ We at length arrived at the little Dutch settlement, and upon entering the room found it filled with sighs that smelt of brandy, and several other unsavoury sounds that were altogether inarticulate. My valet, who was an Irishman, fell into so great a rage at what he heard that he drew his sword ; but not knowing where to lay the blame, he put it up again. We were stunned with these confused noises, but did not hear a single word till about half an hour after ; which I ascribed to the harsh and obdurate sounds of that language, which wanted more time than ours to melt and become audible.

“ After having here met with a very hearty welcome, we went to the cabin of the French, who, to make amends for their three weeks’ silence, were talking and disputing with greater rapidity and confusion than ever I heard in an assembly even of that nation. Their language, as I found, upon the first giving of the weather, fell asunder and dissolved. I was here convinced of an error into which I had before fallen ; for I fancied, that for the freezing of the sound it was necessary for it to be wrapped up, and, as it were, preserved in breath ; but I found my mistake when I heard the sound of a kit playing a minuet over our heads. I asked the occasion of it ; upon which one of the company told me that it would play there above a week longer if the thaw

continued ; ‘ For,’ says he, ‘ finding ourselves bereft of speech we prevailed upon one of the company, who had his musical instrument about him, to play to us from morning to night ; all which time we employed in dancing, in order to dissipate our chagrin, *et tuer le temps.*’ ”

Here Sir John gives very good philosophical reasons why the kit could be heard during the frost ; but as they are something prolix, I pass over them in silence, and shall only observe that the honourable author seems, by his quotations, to have been well versed in the ancient poets, which perhaps raised his fancy above the ordinary pitch of historians, and very much contributed to the embellishment of his writings.

*The Tatler*, No. 254.

Thursday, November 23, 1710.

## XXI

### *Journal of the Court of Honour*

‘*Nostrum est tantas componere lites.*—VIRG.

The proceedings of the Court of Honour, held in Sheer Lane, on Monday, the 20th of November 1710, before Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq., Censor of Great Britain.

PETER PLUMB, of London, merchant, was indicted by the Honourable Mr. Thomas Gules, of Gule Hall, in the county of Salop, for that the said Peter Plumb did in Lombard Street, London, between the hours of two and three in the afternoon, meet the said Mr. Thomas Gules, and after a short salutation, put on his hat, value five

pence, while the Honourable Mr. Gules stood bare-headed for the space of two seconds. It was further urged against the criminal, that, during his discourse with the prosecutor, he feloniously stole the wall of him, having clapped his back against it in such a manner that it was impossible for Mr. Gules to recover it again at his taking leave of him. The prosecutor alleged that he was the cadet of a very ancient family, and that, according to the principles of all the younger brothers of the said family, he had never sullied himself with business, but had chosen rather to starve like a man of honour than do anything beneath his quality. He produced several witnesses that he had never employed himself beyond the twisting of a whip or the making of a pair of nutcrackers, in which he only worked for his diversion, in order to make a present now and then to his friends. The prisoner being asked what he could say for himself, cast several reflections upon the Honourable Mr. Gules : as, that he was not worth a groat ; that nobody in the city would trust him for a halfpenny ; that he owed him money which he had promised to pay him several times, but never kept his word ; and in short, that he was an idle, beggarly fellow, and of no use to the public. This sort of language was very severely reprimanded by the Censor, who told the criminal that he spoke in contempt of the court, and that he should be proceeded against for contumacy, if he did not change his style. The prisoner therefore desired to be heard by his counsel, who urged in his defence, that he put on his hat

through ignorance, and took the wall by accident. They likewise produced several witnesses that he made several motions with his hat in his hand, which are generally understood as an invitation to the person we talk with to be covered ; and that the gentleman not taking the hint, he was forced to put on his hat, as being troubled with a cold. There was likewise an Irishman who deposed, that he had heard him cough three-and-twenty times that morning. And as for the wall, it was alleged that he had taken it inadvertently, to save himself from a shower of rain which was then falling. The Censor, having consulted the men of honour who sat at his right hand on the bench, found they were all of opinion that the defence made by the prisoner's counsel did rather aggravate than extenuate his crime ; that the motions and intimations of the hat were a token of superiority in conversation, and therefore not to be used by the criminal to a man of the prosecutor's quality, who was likewise vested with a double title to the wall at the time of their conversation, both as it was the upper hand, and as it was a shelter from the weather. The evidence being very full and clear, the jury, without going out of court, declared their opinion unanimously by the mouth of their foreman, that the prosecutor was bound in honour to make the sun shine through the criminal, or, as they afterwards explained themselves, to whip him through the lungs.

The Censor knitting his brows into a frown, and looking very sternly upon the jury, after a little pause, gave them to know, that this court was erected for the

finding out of penalties suitable to offences, and to restrain the outrages of private justice ; and that he expected they should moderate their verdict. The jury, therefore, retired, and being willing to comply with the advices of the Censor, after an hour's consultation declared their opinion as follows :

“ That in consideration this was Peter Plumb's first offence, and that there did not appear any ‘ malice prepense ’ in it, as also that he lived in good reputation among his neighbours, and that his taking the wall was only *se defendendo*, the prosecutor should let him escape with life, and content himself with the slitting of his nose and the cutting off both his ears.” Mr. Bickerstaff, smiling upon the court, told them that he thought the punishment, even under its present mitigation, too severe ; and that such penalties might be of ill consequence in a trading nation. He therefore pronounced sentence against the criminal in the following manner : that his hat, which was the instrument of offence, should be forfeited to the court ; that the criminal should go to the warehouse from whence he came, and thence, as occasion should require, proceed to the Exchange, or Garraway's Coffee-house, in what manner he pleased ; but that neither he, nor any of the family of the Plumbs, should hereafter appear in the streets of London out of their coaches, that so the foot-way might be left open and undisturbed for their betters.

Dathan, a peddling Jew, and T. R——, a Welshman, were indicted by the keeper of an alehouse in West-

minster for breaking the peace and two earthen mugs in a dispute about the antiquity of their families, to the great detriment of the house, and disturbance of the whole neighbourhood. Dathan said for himself that he was provoked to it by the Welshman, who pretended that the Welsh were an ancients people than the Jews; "Whereas," says he, "I can show by this genealogy in my hand that I am the son of Mesheck, that was the son of Naboth, that was the son of Shalem, that was the son of——" The Welshman here interrupted him, and told him, "That he could produce shennalogy as well as himself; for that he was John ap Rice, ap Shenkin, ap Shones." He then turned himself to the Censor and told him in the same broken accent, and with much warmth, that the Jew would needs uphold that King Cadwallader was younger than Issachar. Mr. Bickerstaff seemed very much inclined to give sentence against Dathan, as being a Jew; but finding reasons, by some expressions which the Welshman let fall in asserting the antiquity of his family, to suspect that the said Welshman was a Pre-Adamite, he suffered the jury to go out without any previous admonition. After some time they returned, and gave their verdict, that it appearing the persons at the bar did neither of them wear a sword, and that consequently they had no right to quarrel upon a point of honour; to prevent such frivolous appeals for the future, they should both of them be tossed in the same blanket, and there adjust the superiority as they could agree on

it between themselves. The Censor confirmed the verdict.

Richard Newman was indicted by Major Punto for having used the words, "Perhaps it may be so," in a dispute with the said major. The major urged that the word "Perhaps" was questioning his veracity, and that it was an indirect manner of giving him the lie. Richard Newman had nothing more to say for himself than that he intended no such thing, and threw himself upon the mercy of the court. The jury brought in their verdict special.

Mr. Bickerstaff stood up, and after having cast his eyes over the whole assembly, hemmed thrice. He then acquainted them that he had laid down a rule to himself, which he was resolved never to depart from, and which, as he conceived, would very much conduce to the shortening the business of the court; I mean, says he, never to allow of the lie being given by construction, implication, or induction, but by the sole use of the word itself. He then proceeded to show the great mischiefs that had arisen to the English nation from that pernicious monosyllable; that it had bred the most fatal quarrels between the dearest friends; that it had frequently thinned the guards, and made great havoc in the army; that it had sometimes weakened the city trained-bands; and, in a word, had destroyed many of the bravest men in the isle of Great Britain. For the prevention of which evils for the future, he instructed the jury to present the word itself as a nuisance in the English



tongue; and further promised them that he would, upon such their presentment, publish an edict of the court for the entire banishment and exclusion of it out of the discourses and conversation of all civil societies.

This is a true copy,

CHARLES LILLIE.

Monday next is set apart for the trial of several female causes.

*N.B.*—The case of the hassock will come on between the hours of nine and ten.

*The Tatler*, No. 256.

Tuesday, November 28, 1710.

## XXII

### *Religions in Waxwork*

*In nova fert animus mutatas dicere formas*

*Corpora : Dii, coeptis (nam vos mutastis et illas)*

*Aspèrate meis.*

OID, *Met.*

*From my own Apartment, November 29.*

EVERY nation is distinguished by productions that are peculiar to it. Great Britain is particularly fruitful in religions, that shoot up and flourish in this climate more than in any other. We are so famous abroad for our great variety of sects and opinions, that an ingenious friend of mine, who is lately returned from his travels, assures me, there is a show at this time carried up and down in Germany, which repre-

sents all the religions in Great Britain in waxwork. Notwithstanding that the pliancy of the matter in which the images are wrought makes it capable of being moulded into all shapes and figures, my friend tells me that he did not think it possible for it to be twisted and tortured into so many screwed faces and wry features as appeared in several of the figures that composed the show. I was, indeed, so pleased with the design of the German artist, that I begged my friend to give me an account of it in all its particulars, which he did after the following manner.

"I have often," says he, "been present at a show of elephants, camels, dromedaries, and other strange creatures, but I never saw so great an assembly of spectators as were met together at the opening of this great piece of waxwork. We were all placed in a large hall, according to the price that we had paid for our seats. The curtain that hung before the show was made by a master of tapestry, who had woven it in the figure of a monstrous hydra that had several heads, which brandished out their tongues, and seemed to hiss at each other. Some of these heads were large and entire; and where any of them had been lopped away, there sprouted up several in the room of them; insomuch that for one head cut off, a man might see ten, twenty, or an hundred of a smaller size, creeping through the wound. In short, the whole picture was nothing but confusion and bloodshed. On a sudden," says my friend, "I was startled with a flourish of many musical instruments that I had

never heard before, which was followed by a short tune (if it might be so called) wholly made up of jars and discords. Among the rest, there was an organ, a bagpipe, a graying-board, a stentorophonic trumpet, with several wind instruments of a most disagreeable sound, which I do not so much as know the names of. After a short flourish, the curtain was drawn up, and we were presented with the most extraordinary assembly of figures that ever entered into a man's imagination. The design of the workman was so well expressed in the dumb show before us, that it was not hard for an Englishman to comprehend the meaning of it.

"The principal figures were placed in a row, consisting of seven persons. The middle figure, which immediately attracted the eyes of the whole company, and was much bigger than the rest, was formed like a matron, dressed in the habit of an elderly woman of quality in Queen Elizabeth's days. The most remarkable parts of her dress were the beaver with the steeple crown, the scarf, that was darker than sable, and the lawn apron that was whiter than ermine. Her gown was of the richest black velvet, and just upon her heart she wore several large diamonds of an inestimable value, disposed in the form of a cross. She bore an inexpressible cheerfulness and dignity in her aspect; and though she seemed in years, appeared with so much spirit and vivacity, as gave her at the same time an air of old age and immortality. I found my heart touched with so much love and

reverence at the sight of her, that the tears ran down my face as I looked upon her ; and still the more I looked upon her, the more my heart was melted with the sentiments of filial tenderness and duty. I discovered every moment something so charming in this figure, that I could scarce take my eyes off it. On its right hand there sat the figure of a woman so covered with ornaments, that her face, her body, and her hands were almost entirely hid under them. The little you could see of her face was painted ; and, what I thought very odd, had something in it like artificial wrinkles ; but I was the less surprised at it, when I saw upon her forehead an old-fashioned tower of grey hairs. Her head-dress rose very high by three several stories or degrees ; her garments had a thousand colours in them, and were embroidered with crosses in gold, silver, and silk : she had nothing on, so much as a glove or a slipper, which was not marked with this figure ; nay, so superstitiously fond did she appear of it, that she sat cross-legged. I was quickly sick of this tawdry composition of ribbons, silks, and jewels, and therefore cast my eye on a dame which was just the reverse of it. I need not tell my reader that the lady before described was Popery, or that she I am now going to describe is Presbytery. She sat on the left hand of the venerable matron, and so much resembled her in the features of her countenance that she seemed her sister ; but at the same time that one observed a likeness in her beauty, one could not but take notice that there was something in it

sickly and splenetic. Her face had enough to discover the relation, but it was drawn up into a peevish figure, soured with discontent, and overcast with melancholy. She seemed offended at the matron for the shape of her hat, as too much resembling the triple coronet of the person who sat by her. One might see, likewise, that she dissented from the white apron and the cross ; for which reasons she had made herself a plain homely dowdy, and turned her face towards the sectaries that sat on the left hand, as being afraid of looking upon the matron, lest she should see the harlot by her.

“On the right hand of Popery sat Judaism, represented by an old man embroidered with phylacteries, and distinguished by many typical figures, which I had not skill enough to unriddle. He was placed among the rubbish of a temple ; but instead of weeping over it (which I should have expected from him), he was counting out a bag of money upon the ruins of it.

“On his right hand was Deism, or Natural Religion. This was a figure of an half-naked awkward country wench, who with proper ornaments and education would have made an agreeable and beautiful appearance ; but for want of those advantages, was such a spectacle as a man would blush to look upon.

“I have now,” continued my friend, “given you an account of those who were placed on the right hand of the matron, and who, according to the order in which they sat, were Deism, Judaism, and Popery. On the left hand, as I told you, appeared Presbytery.

The next to her was a figure which somewhat puzzled me : it was that of a man looking, with horror in his eyes, upon a silver basin filled with water. Observing something in his countenance that looked like lunacy, I fancied at first that he was to express that kind of distraction which the physicians call the Hydrophobia ; but considering what the intention of the show was, I immediately recollected myself, and concluded it to be Anabaptism.

“ The next figure was a man that sat under a most profound composure of mind : he wore an hat whose brims were exactly parallel with the horizon : his garment had neither sleeve nor skirt, nor so much as a superfluous button. What they called his cravat was a little piece of white linen quilled with great exactness, and hanging below his chin about two inches. Seeing a book in his hand, I asked our artist what it was, who told me it was the Quaker’s religion ; upon which I desired a sight of it. Upon perusal, I found it to be nothing but a new-fashioned grammar, or an art of abridging ordinary discourse. The nouns were reduced to a very small number, as the *light*, *friend*, *Babylon*. The principal of his pronouns was *thou* ; and as for *you*, *ye*, and *yours* I found they were not looked upon as parts of speech in this grammar. All the verbs wanted the second person plural ; the participles ended all in *ing* or *ed*, which were marked with a particular accent. There were no adverbs besides *yea* and *nay*. The same thrift was observed in the prepositions. The conjunctions were only

*hem!* and *ha!* and the interjections brought under the three heads of sighing, sobbing, and groaning. There was at the end of the grammar a little nomenclature, called 'The Christian Man's Vocabulary,' which gave new appellations, or (if you will) Christian names to almost everything in life. I replaced the book in the hand of the figure, not without admiring the simplicity of its garb, speech, and behaviour.

"Just opposite to this row of religions there was a statue dressed in a fool's coat, with a cap of bells upon his head, laughing and pointing at the figures that stood before him. This idiot is supposed to say in his heart what David's fool did some thousands of years ago, and was therefore designed as a proper representative of those among us who are called atheists and infidels by others, and free-thinkers by themselves.

"There were many other groups of figures which I did not know the meaning of; but seeing a collection of both sexes turning their backs upon the company, and laying their heads very close together, I inquired after their religion, and found that they called themselves the Philadelphians, or the family of love.

"In the opposite corner there sat another little congregation of strange figures, opening their mouths as wide as they could gape, and distinguished by the title of 'The sweet Singers of Israel.'

"I must not omit that in this assembly of wax there were several pieces that moved by clock-work, and gave great satisfaction to the spectators. Behind

the matron there stood one of these figures, and behind Popery another, which, as the artist told us, were each of them the genius of the person they attended. That behind Popery represented Persecution, and the other Moderation. The first of these moved by secret springs towards a great heap of dead bodies that lay piled upon one another at a considerable distance behind the principal figures. There were written on the foreheads of these dead men several hard words, as Pre-Adamites, Sabbatarians, Cameronians, Muggletonians, Brownists, Independents, Masonites, Camisars, and the like. At the approach of Persecution, it was so contrived, that as she held up her bloody flag, the whole assembly of dead men, like those in the *Rehearsal*, started up and drew their swords. This was followed by great clashings and noise, when, in the midst of the tumult, the figure of Moderation moved gently towards this new army, which, upon her holding up a paper in her hand, inscribed 'Liberty of Conscience,' immediately fell into a heap of carcasses, remaining in the same quiet posture that they lay at first."

*The Tatler*, No. 257.

Thursday, November 30, 1710.



## XXIII

*Journal of the Court of Honour*

—*Vexat censura columbas.*—JUV.

A Continuation of the Journal of the Court of Honour, held in Sheer Lane, on Monday the 27th of November, before Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq., Censor of Great Britain.

ELIZABETH MAKEBATE, of the parish of St. Catherine's, spinster, was indicted for surreptitiously taking away the hassock from under the Lady Grave-Airs, between the hours of four and five, on Sunday the twenty-sixth of November. The prosecutor deposed, that as she stood up to make a curtsy to a person of quality in a neighbouring pew, the criminal conveyed away the hassock by stealth; insomuch that the prosecutor was obliged to sit all the while she was at church, or to say her prayers in a posture that did not become a woman of her quality. The prisoner pleaded inadvertency; and the jury were going to bring it in chance-medley, had not several witnesses been produced against the said Elizabeth Makebate, that she was an old offender and a woman of a bad reputation. It appeared in particular, that on the Sunday before she had detracted from a new petticoat of Mrs. Mary Doelittle, having said in the hearing of several credible witnesses, that the said petticoat was scoured; to the great grief and detriment of the said Mary Doelittle.

There were likewise many evidences produced against the criminal, that though she never failed to come to church on Sunday, she was a most notorious sabbath-breaker, and that she spent her whole time, during divine service, in disparaging other people's clothes, and whispering to those who sat next her. Upon the whole, she was found guilty of the indictment, and received sentence to ask pardon of the prosecutor upon her bare knees, without either cushion or hassock under her, in the face of the court.

*N.B.* As soon as the sentence was executed on the criminal, which was done in open court with the utmost severity, the first lady of the bench on Mr. Bickerstaff's right hand stood up, and made a motion to the court, that whereas it was impossible for women of fashion to dress themselves before the church was half done, and whereas many confusions and inconveniences did arise thereupon, it might be lawful for them to send a footman, in order to keep their places, as was usual in other polite and well-regulated assemblies. The motion was ordered to be entered in the books, and considered at a more convenient time.

Charles Cambrick, Linen-draper, in the city of Westminster, was indicted for speaking obscenely to the Lady Penelope Touchwood. It appeared that the prosecutor and her woman going in a stage-coach from London to Brentford, where they were to be met by the lady's own chariot, the criminal and another of his acquaintance travelled with them in

the same coach, at which time the prisoner talked bawdy for the space of three miles and a half. The prosecutor alleged, that over against the Old Fox at Knightsbridge he mentioned the word linen; that at the further end of Kensington he made use of the term smock; and that before he came to Hammer-smith he talked almost a quarter of an hour upon wedding-shifts. The prosecutor's woman confirmed what her lady had said, and added further, that she had never seen her lady in so great a confusion, and in such a taking, as she was during the whole discourse of the criminal. The prisoner had little to say for himself, but that he talked only in his own trade, and meant no hurt by what he said. The jury, however, found him guilty, and represented by their forewoman, that such discourses were apt to sully the imagination, and that by a concatenation of ideas the word linen implied many things that were not proper to be stirred up in the mind of a woman who was of the prosecutor's quality, and therefore gave it as their verdict, that the linen-draper should lose his tongue. Mr. Bickerstaff said, he thought the prosecutor's ears were as much to blame as the prisoner's tongue, and therefore gave sentence as follows: That they should both be placed over against one another in the midst of the court, there to remain for the space of one quarter of an hour, during which time the linen-draper was to be gagged, and the lady to hold her hands close upon both her ears; "which was executed accordingly.

Edward Callicoat was indicted as an accomplice to Charles Cambrick, for that he the said Edward Callicoat did, by his silence and his smiles, seem to approve and abet the said Charles Cambrick in everything he said. It appeared that the prisoner was foreman of the shop to the aforesaid Charles Cambrick, and by his post obliged to smile at everything that the other should be pleased to say: upon which he was acquitted.

Josias Shallow was indicted in the name of Dame Winifred, sole relict of Richard Dainty, Esq., for having said several times in company, and in the hearing of several persons there present, that he was extremely obliged to the widow Dainty, and that he should never be able sufficiently to express his gratitude. The prosecutor urged, that this might blast her reputation, and that it was in effect a boasting of favours which he had never received. The prisoner seemed to be much astonished at the construction which was put upon his words, and said, that he meant nothing by them, but, that the widow had befriended him in a lease, and was very kind to his younger sister. The jury finding him a little weak in his understanding, without going out of the court, brought in their verdict, *ignoramus*.

Ursula Goodenough was accused by the Lady Betty Wou'dbe for having said that she, the Lady Betty Wou'dbe, was painted. The prisoner brought several persons of good credit to witness to her reputation, and proved by undeniable evidences that she

was never at the place where the words were said to have been uttered. The Censor, observing the behaviour of the prosecutor, found reason-to believe, that she had indicted the prisoner for no other reason but to make her complexion be taken notice of, which indeed was very fresh and beautiful; he therefore asked the offender, with a very stern voice, how she could presume to spread so groundless a report? And whether she saw any colours in the Lady Wou'dbe's face that could procure credit to such a falsehood? "Do you see," says he, "any lilies or roses in her cheeks, any bloom, any probability?"—The prosecutor, not able to bear such language any longer, told him that he talked like a blind old fool, and that she was ashamed to have entertained any opinion of his wisdom; but she was soon put to silence, and sentenced to wear her mask for five months, and not to presume to show her face till the town should be empty.

Benjamin Buzzard, Esq., was indicted for having told the Lady Everbloom at a public ball, that she looked very well for a woman of her years. The prisoner not denying the fact, and persisting before the court that he looked upon it as a compliment, the jury brought him in *non compos mentis*.

The court then adjourned to Monday the 11th instant.

*Copia vera,*

CHARLES LILLIE.

## XXIV

*Journal of the Court of Honour**Arbiter hic igitur factus de lite jocosæ.—OVID, Met.*

Continuation of the Journal of the Court of Honour,  
&c.

As soon as the court was sat, the ladies of the bench presented, according to order, a table of all the laws now in force, relating to visits and visiting days, methodically digested under their respective heads, which the Censor ordered to be laid upon the table, and afterwards proceeded upon the business of the day.

Henry Heedless, Esq., was indicted by Colonel Touchy, of Her Majesty's trained bands, upon an action of assault and battery; for that he, the said Mr. Heedless, having espied a feather upon the shoulder of the said colonel, struck it off gently with the end of a walking staff, value three-pence. It appeared that the prosecutor did not think himself injured till a few days after the aforesaid blow was given him; but that having ruminated with himself for several days, and conferred upon it with other officers of the militia, he concluded that he had in effect been cudgelled by Mr. Heedless, and that he ought to resent it accordingly. The counsel for the prosecutor alleged that the shoulder was the tenderest part in a man of honour; that it had a natural antipathy to a stick,

and that every touch of it, with anything made in the fashion of a cane, was to be interpreted as a wound in that part, and a violation of the person's honour who received it. Mr. Heedless replied that what he had done was out of kindness to the prosecutor, as not thinking it proper for him to appear at the head of the trained bands with a feather upon his shoulder ; and further added, that the stick he had made use of on this occasion was so very small that the prosecutor could not have felt it, had he broken it on his shoulders. The Censor hereupon directed the jury to examine into the nature of the staff, for that a great deal would depend upon that particular. Upon which he explained to them the different degrees of offence that might be given by the touch of crab-tree from that of cane, and by the touch of cane from that of a plain hazel stick. The jury, after a short perusal of the staff, declared their opinion by the mouth of their foreman, that the substance of the staff was British oak. The Censor then, observing that there was some dust on the skirts of the criminal's coat, ordered the prosecutor to beat it off with his aforesaid oaken plant ; " And thus," said the Censor, " I shall decide this cause by the law of retaliation : if Mr. Heedless did the colonel a good office, the colonel will, by this means, return it in kind ; but if Mr. Heedless should at any time boast that he had cudgelled the colonel, or laid his staff over his shoulders, the colonel might boast in his turn that he has brushed Mr. Heedless's jacket, or (to use the phrase of an

ingenious author) that he has rubbed him down with an oaken towel."

Benjamin Busy, of London, merchant, was indicted by Jasper Tattle, Esq., for having pulled out his watch, and looked upon it thrice, while the said Esquire Tattle was giving him an account of the funeral of the said Esquire Tattle's first wife.\* The prisoner alleged in his defence that he was going to buy stocks at the time when he met the prosecutor; and that during the story of the prosecutor the said stocks rose above two per cent., to the great detriment of the prisoner. The prisoner further brought several witnesses to prove, that the said Jasper Tattle, Esq., was a most notorious storyteller; that before he met the prisoner he had hindered one of the prisoner's acquaintance from the pursuit of his lawful business, with the account of his second marriage; and that he had detained another by the button of his coat that very morning, till he had heard several witty sayings and contrivances of the prosecutor's eldest son, who was a boy of about five years of age. Upon the whole matter, Mr. Bickerstaff dismissed the accusation as frivolous, and sentenced the prosecutor to pay damages to the prisoner for what the prisoner had lost by giving him so long and patient an hearing. He further reprimanded the prosecutor very severely, and told him that if he proceeded in his usual manner to interrupt the business of mankind he would set a fine upon him for every quarter of an hour's impertinence, and regulate the said fine according as the time of



the person so injured should appear to be more or less precious.

Sir Paul Swash, Kt., was indicted by Peter Double, Gent., for not returning the bow which he received of the said Peter Double, on Wednesday the sixth instant, at the playhouse in the Haymarket. The prisoner denied the receipt of any such bow, and alleged in his defence that the prosecutor would oftentimes look full in his face, but that when he bowed to the said prosecutor he would take no notice of it, or bow to somebody else that sat quite on the other side of him. He likewise alleged that several ladies had complained of the prosecutor, who, after ogling them a quarter of an hour, upon their making a curtsy to him, would not return the civility of a bow. The Censor observing several glances of the prosecutor's eye, and perceiving that when he talked to the court he looked upon the jury, found reason to suspect that there was a wrong cast in his sight, which upon examination proved true. The Censor therefore ordered the prisoner, that he might not produce any more confusions in public assemblies, never to bow to anybody whom he did not at the same time call to by his name.

Oliver Bluff and Benjamin Browbeat were indicted for going to fight a duel since the erection of the Court of Honour. It appeared that they were both taken up in the street as they passed by the court, in their way to the fields behind Montague House. The criminals would answer nothing for themselves,

but that they were going to execute a challenge which had been made above a week before the Court of Honour was erected. The Censor finding some reasons to suspect, by the sturdiness of their behaviour, that they were not so very brave as they would have the court believe them, ordered them both to be searched by the grand jury, who found a breastplate upon the one, and two quires of paper upon the other. The breastplate was immediately ordered to be hung upon a peg over Mr. Bickerstaff's tribunal, and the paper to be laid upon the table for the use of his clerk. He then ordered the criminals to button up their bosoms, and, if they pleased, proceed to their duel. Upon which they both went very quietly out of the court, and retired to their respective lodgings.

The court then adjourned till after the holidays.

*Copia vera,*

CHARLES LILLIE.

*The Tatler*, No. 265.

Tuesday, December 19, 1710.

## XXV

### *The Spectator*

*Non fumum ex fulgore, sed ex fumo dare lucem  
Cogitat, ut speciosa dehinc miracula promat.*—HOR.

I HAVE observed that a reader seldom peruses a book with pleasure till he knows whether the writer of it be a black or a fair man, of a mild or choleric disposition, married or a bachelor, with other particulars of the

like nature, that conduce very much to the right understanding of an author. To gratify this curiosity, which is so natural to a reader, I design this paper and my next-as prefatory discourses to my following writings, and shall give some account in them of the several persons that are engaged in this work. As the chief trouble of compiling, digesting, and correcting will fall to my share, I must do myself the justice to open the work with my own history.

I was born to a small hereditary estate, which, according to the tradition of the village where it lies, was bounded by the same hedges and ditches in William the Conqueror's time that it is at present, and has been delivered down from father to son whole and entire, without the loss or acquisition of a single field or meadow, during the space of six hundred years. There runs a story in the family that when my mother was gone with child of me about three months, she dreamt that she was brought to bed of a judge. Whether this might proceed from a law-suit which was then depending in the family, or my father's being a justice of the peace, I cannot determine; for I am not so vain as to think it preserved any dignity that I should arrive at in my future life, though that was the interpretation which the neighbourhood put upon it. The gravity of my behaviour at my very first appearance in the world, and all the time that I sucked, seemed to favour my mother's dream; for, as she has often told me, I threw away my rattle before I was two months old, and would not make

use of my coral till they had taken away the bells from it.

As for the rest of my infancy, there being nothing in it remarkable, I shall pass it over in silence. I find that, during my nonage, I had the reputation of a very sullen youth, but was always a favourite of my schoolmaster, who used to say that my parts were solid and would wear well. I had not been long at the university before I distinguished myself by a most profound silence; for during the space of eight years, excepting in the public exercises of the college, I scarce uttered the quantity of an hundred words; and indeed do not remember that I ever spoke three sentences together in my whole life. Whilst I was in this learned body, I applied myself with so much diligence to my studies, that there are very few celebrated books, either in the learned or the modern tongues, which I am not acquainted with.

Upon the death of my father I was resolved to travel into foreign countries, and therefore left the university with the character of an odd unaccountable fellow, that had a great deal of learning, if I would but show it. An insatiable thirst after knowledge carried me into all the countries of Europe in which there was anything new or strange to be seen; nay, to such a degree was my curiosity raised, that having read the controversies of some great men concerning the antiquities of Egypt, I made a voyage to Grand Cairo, on purpose to take the measure of a pyramid; and as soon as I had set myself right in that particular,

returned to my native country with great satisfaction.

I have passed my latter years in this city, where I am frequently seen in most public places, though there are not above half a dozen of my select friends that know me; of whom my next paper shall give a more particular account. There is no place of general resort wherein I do not often make my appearance; sometimes I am seen thrusting my head into a round of politicians at Will's, and listening with great attention to the narratives that are made in those little circular audiences. Sometimes I smoke a pipe at Child's, and whilst I seem attentive to nothing but the *Postman*, overhear the conversation of every table in the room. I appear on Sunday nights at St. James's Coffee-house, and sometimes join the little committee of politics in the inner room, as one who comes there to hear and improve. My face is likewise very well known at the Grecian, the Cocoa-Tree, and in the theatres both of Drury Lane and the Haymarket. I have been taken for a merchant upon the Exchange for above these ten years, and sometimes pass for a Jew in the assembly of stock-jobbers at Jonathan's. In short, wherever I see a cluster of people, I always mix with them, though I never open my lips but in my own club.

Thus I live in the world rather as a Spectator of mankind than as one of the species; by which means I have made myself a speculative statesman, soldier, merchant, and artisan, without ever meddling with any

practical part in life. I am very well versed in the theory of an husband or a father, and can discern the errors in the economy, business, and diversion of others, better than those who are engaged in them ; as standers-by discover blots, which are apt to escape those who are in the game. I never espoused any part with violence, and am resolved to observe an exact neutrality between the Whigs and Tories, unless I shall be forced to declare myself by the hostilities of either side. In short, I have acted in all the parts of my life as a looker-on, which is the character I intend to preserve in this paper.

I have given the reader just so much of my history and character, as to let him see I am not altogether unqualified for the business I have undertaken. As for other particulars in my life and adventures, I shall insert them in following papers, as I shall see occasion. In the meantime, when I consider how much I have seen, read, and heard, I begin to blame my own taciturnity ; and since I have neither time nor inclination to communicate the fulness of my heart in speech, I am resolved to do it in writing, and to print myself out, if possible, before I die. I have been often told by my friends that it is pity so many useful discoveries which I have made should be in the possession of a silent man. For this reason therefore, I shall publish a sheet full of thoughts every morning, for the benefit of my contemporaries ; and if I can any way contribute to the diversion or improvement of the country in which I live, I shall leave it, when I am summoned

out of it, with the secret satisfaction of thinking that I have not lived in vain.

There are three very material points which I have not spoken to in this paper, and which, for several important reasons, I must keep to myself, at least for some time : I mean, an account of my name, my age, and my lodgings. I must confess I would gratify my reader in anything that is reasonable ; but as for these three particulars, though I am sensible they might tend very much to the embellishment of my paper, I cannot yet come to a resolution of communicating them to the public. They would indeed draw me out of that obscurity which I have enjoyed for many years, and expose me in public places to several salutes and civilities, which have been always very disagreeable to me ; for the greatest pain I can suffer is the being talked to, and being stared at. It is for this reason likewise, that I keep my complexion and dress as very great secrets ; though it is not impossible but I may make discoveries of both in the progress of the work I have undertaken.

After having been thus particular upon myself, I shall in to-morrow's paper give an account of those gentlemen who are concerned with me in this work ; for, as I have before intimated, a plan of it is laid and concerted (as all other matters of importance are) in a club. However, as my friends have engaged me to stand in the front, those who have a mind to correspond with me may direct their letters to the Spectator, at Mr. Buckley's, in Little Britain. For I must

further acquaint the reader, that though our club meets only on Tuesdays and Thursdays, we have appointed a committee to sit every night, for the inspection of all such papers as may contribute to the advancement of the public weal.

*The Spectator*, No. 1.

Thursday, March 1, 1710-11.

## XXVI

### *The Spectator Club*<sup>1</sup>

—*Ast alii sex*

*Et plures, uno conclamant ore.*—Juy.

THE first of our society is a gentleman of Worcestershire, of ancient descent, a baronet, his name Sir Roger de Coverley. His great-grandfather was inventor of that famous country-dance which is called after him. All who know that shire are very well acquainted with the parts and merits of Sir Roger. He is a gentleman that is very singular in his behaviour, but his singularities proceed from his good sense, and are contradictions to the manners of the world, only as he thinks the world is in the wrong. However, this humour creates him no enemies, for he does nothing with sourness or obstinacy; and his being unconfined to modes and forms makes him but the readier and

<sup>1</sup> This paper is by Steele, but is here inserted because it gives an account of the several members of the Spectator Club. The style of the paper is above Steele's average, and may have been touched by Addison.



more capable to please and oblige all who know him. When he is in town he lives in Soho Square. , It is said, he keeps himself a bachelor by reason he was crossed in love by a perverse beautiful widow of the next county to him. Before this disappointment Sir Roger was what you call a fine gentleman, had often supped with my Lord Rochester and Sir George Etherege, fought a duel upon his first coming to town, and kicked Bully Dawson in a public coffee-house for calling him youngster. But being ill used by the above-mentioned widow, he was very serious for a year and a half ; and though, his temper being naturally jovial, he at last got over it, he grew careless of himself, and never dressed afterwards ; he continues to wear a coat and doublet of the same cut that were in fashion at the time of his repulse, which, in his merry humours, he tells us, has been in and out twelve times since he first wore it. 'Tis said Sir Roger grew humble in his desires after he had forgot this cruel beauty, insomuch that it is reported he has frequently offended in point of chastity with beggars and gypsies : but this is looked upon by his friends rather as matter of raillery than truth. He is now in his fifty-sixth year, cheerful, gay, and hearty ; keeps a good house both in town and country ; a great lover of mankind ; but there is such a mirthful cast in his behaviour, that he is rather beloved than esteemed. His tenants grow rich, his servants look satisfied, all the young women profess love to him, and the young men are glad of his company : when he comes into a house he calls

the servants by their names, and talks all the way upstairs to a visit. I must not omit that Sir Roger is a justice of the quorum; that he fills the chair at a quarter-session with great abilities, and three months ago gained universal applause by explaining a passage in the Game Act.

The gentleman next in esteem and authority among us is another bachelor, who is a member of the Inner Temple; a man of great probity, wit, and understanding; but he has chosen his place of residence rather to obey the direction of an old humorous father than in pursuit of his own inclinations. He was placed there to study the laws of the land, and is the most learned of any of the house in those of the stage. Aristotle and Longinus are much better understood by him than Littleton or Coke. The father sends up every post questions relating to marriage-articles, leases, and tenures in the neighbourhood; all which questions he agrees with an attorney to answer and take care of in the lump. He is studying the passions themselves, when he should be inquiring into the debates among men which arise from them. He knows the argument of each of the orations of Demosthenes and Tully, but not one case in the reports of our own courts. No one ever took him for a fool; but none, except his intimate friends, know he has a great deal of wit. This turn makes him at once both disinterested and agreeable: as few of his thoughts are drawn from business, they are most of them fit for conversation. His taste of books is a little too

just for the age he lives in ; he has read all, but approves of very few. His familiarity with the customs, manners, actions, and writings of the ancients makes him a very delicate observer of what occurs to him in the present world. He is an excellent critic, and the time of the play is his hour of business ; exactly at five he passes through New Inn, crosses through Russell Court, and takes a turn at Will's till the play begins ; he has his shoes rubbed and his periwig powdered at the barber's as you go into the Rose. It is for the good of the audience when he is at a play, for the actors have an ambition to please him.

The person of next consideration is Sir Andrew Freeport, a merchant of great eminence in the city of London ; a person of indefatigable industry, strong reason, and great experience. His notions of trade are noble and generous, and (as every rich man has usually some sly way of jesting, which would make no great figure were he not a rich man) he calls the sea the British Common. He is acquainted with commerce in all its parts, and will tell you it is a stupid and barbarous way to extend dominion by arms ; for true power is to be got by arts and industry. He will often argue, that if this part of our trade were well cultivated, we should gain from one nation ; and if another, from another. I have heard him prove that diligence makes more lasting acquisitions than valour, and that sloth has ruined more nations than the sword. He abounds in several frugal maxims, amongst which the greatest favourite is, " A penny

saved is a penny got." A general trader of good sense is pleasanter company than a general scholar; and Sir Andrew having a natural unaffected eloquence, the perspicuity of his discourse gives the same pleasure that wit would in another man. He has made his fortunes himself; and says that England may be richer than other kingdoms, by as plain methods as he himself is richer than other men; though at the same time I can say this of him, that there is not a point in the compass but blows home a ship in which he is an owner.

Next to Sir Andrew in the club-room sits Captain Sentry, a gentleman of great courage, good understanding, but invincible modesty. He is one of those that deserve very well, but are very awkward at putting their talents within the observation of such as should take notice of them. He was some years a captain, and behaved himself with great gallantry in several engagements and at several sieges; but having a small estate of his own, and being next heir to Sir Roger, he has quitted a way of life in which no man can rise suitably to his merit, who is not something of a courtier as well as a soldier. I have heard him often lament, that in a profession where merit is placed in so conspicuous a view, impudence should get the better of modesty. When he has talked to this purpose, I never heard him make a sour expression, but frankly confess that he left the world, because he was not fit for it. A strict honesty and an even regular behaviour are in themselves obstacles to him that must press

through crowds who endeavour at the same end with himself, the favour of a commander. He will, however, in this way of talk, excuse generals for not disposing according to men's desert, or inquiring into it: 'for, says he, that great man who has a mind to help me, has as many to break through to come at me, as I have to come at him: therefore he will conclude, that a man who would make a figure, especially in a military way, must get over all false modesty, and assist his patron against the importunity of other pretenders, by a proper assurance in his own vindication. He says it is a civil cowardice to be backward in asserting what you ought to expect, as it is a military fear to be slow in attacking when it is your duty. With this candour does the gentleman speak of himself and others. The same frankness runs through all his conversation. The military part of his life has furnished him with many adventures, in the relation of which he is very agreeable to the company; for he is never overbearing, though accustomed to command men in the utmost degree below him; nor ever too obsequious, from an habit of obeying men highly above him.

But that our society may not appear a set of humourists unacquainted with the gallantries and pleasures of the age, we have among us the gallant Will Honeycomb, a gentleman who, according to his years, should be in the decline of his life, but having ever been very careful of his person, and always had a very easy fortune, time has made but very little impression, either by wrinkles on his forehead, or traces in his

brain. His person is well turned, and of a good height. He is very ready at that sort of discourse with which men usually entertain women. He has all his life dressed very well, and remembers habits as others do men. He can smile when one speaks to him, and laughs easily. He knows the history of every mode, and can inform you from which of the French king's wenches our wives and daughters had this manner of curling their hair, that way of placing their hoods; whose frailty was covered by such a sort of petticoat, and whose vanity to show her foot made that part of the dress so short in such a year. In a word, all his conversation and knowledge has been in the female world: as other men of his age will take notice to you what such a minister said upon such and such an occasion, he will tell you when the Duke of Monmouth danced at court such a woman was then smitten, another was taken with him at the head of his troop in the park. In all these important relations, he has ever about the same time received a kind glance or a blow of a fan from some celebrated beauty, mother of the present Lord such-a-one. If you speak of a young commoner that said a lively thing in the house, he starts up, "He has good blood in his veins: Tom Mirabel begot him: the rogue cheated me in that affair: that young fellow's mother used me more like a dog than any woman I ever made advances to." This way of talking of his very much enlivens the conversation among us of a more sedate turn; and I find there is not one of the company, but myself,

who rarely speak at all, but speaks of him as of that sort of man who is usually called a well-bred fine gentleman. To conclude his character, where women are not concerned, he is an honest worthy man.

I cannot tell whether I am to account him whom I am next to speak of as one of our company ; for he visits us but seldom, but when he does, it adds to every man else a new enjoyment of himself. He is a clergyman, a very philosophic man, of general learning, great sanctity of life, and the most exact breeding. He has the misfortune to be of a very weak constitution, and consequently cannot accept of such cares and business as preferments in his function would oblige him to : he is therefore among divines what a chamber-counsellor is among lawyers. The probity of his mind and the integrity of his life create him followers, as being eloquent or loud advances others. He seldom introduces the subject he speaks upon ; but we are so far gone in years that he observes, when he is among us, an earnestness to have him fall on some divine topic, which he always treats with much authority, as one who has no interests in this world, as one who is hastening to the object of all his wishes, and conceives hope from his decays and infirmities. These are my ordinary companions.

*The Spectator*, No. 2.

Friday, March 2, 1711.

## XXVII

*The Vision of Public Credit*

*Quoi quisque fere studio devinctus adhaeret :  
Aut quibus in rebus multum sumus ante morati :  
Atque in qua ratione fuit contenta magis mens ;  
In somnis eadem plerumque videmur obire.*

LUCR. l. iv.

IN one of my late rambles, or rather speculations, I looked into the great hall where the Bank is kept, and was not a little pleased to see the directors, secretaries, and clerks, with all the other members of that wealthy corporation, ranged in their several stations, according to the parts they act in that just and regular oeconomy. This revived in my memory the many discourses which I had both read and heard concerning the decay of public credit, with the methods of restoring it, and which, in my opinion, have always been defective, because they have always been made with an eye to separate interests and party principles.

The thoughts of the day gave my mind employment for the whole night, so that I fell insensibly into a kind of methodical dream, which disposed all my contemplations into a vision or allegory, or what else the reader shall please to call it.

Methought I returned to the great hall, where I had been the morning before, but, to my surprise, instead of the company that I left there, I saw, towards the upper end of the hall, a beautiful virgin seated



on a throne of gold. Her name (as they told me) was Public Credit. The walls, instead of being adorned with pictures and maps, were hung with many Acts of Parliament written in golden letters. At the upper end of the hall was the Magna Charta, with the Act of Uniformity on the right hand, and the Act of Toleration on the left. At the lower end of the hall was the Act of Settlement, which was placed full in the eye of the virgin that sat upon the throne. Both the sides of the hall were covered with such Acts of Parliament as had been made for the establishment of public funds. The lady seemed to set an unspeakable value upon these several pieces of furniture, insomuch that she often refreshed her eye with them, and often smiled with a secret pleasure, as she looked upon them ; but at the same time showed a very particular uneasiness, if she saw anything approaching that might hurt them. She appeared indeed infinitely timorous in all her behaviour ; and, whether it was from the delicacy of her constitution, or that she was troubled with the vapours, as I was afterwards told by one who I found was none of her well-wishers, she changed colour and startled at everything she heard. She was likewise (as I afterwards found) a greater valetudinarian than any I had ever met with, even in her own sex, and subject to such momentary consumptions, that, in the twinkling of an eye, she would fall away from the most florid complexion and the most healthful state of body, and wither into a skeleton. Her recoveries were often as sudden as her decays, insomuch that

she would revive in a moment out of a wasting distemper into a habit of the highest health and vigour.

I had very soon an opportunity of observing these quick turns and changes in her constitution. There sat at her feet a couple of secretaries, who received every hour letters from all parts of the world, which the one or the other of them was perpetually reading to her; and, according to the news she heard, to which she was exceedingly attentive, she changed colour, and discovered many symptoms of health or sickness.

Behind the throne was a prodigious heap of bags of money, which were piled upon one another so high that they touched the ceiling. The floor, on her right hand and on her left, was covered with vast sums of gold that rose up in pyramids on either side of her: but this I did not so much wonder at, when I heard, upon inquiry, that she had the same virtue in her touch which the poets tell us a Lydian king was formerly possessed of; and that she could convert whatever she pleased into that precious metal.

After a little dizziness, and confused hurry of thought, which a man often meets with in a dream, methought the hall was alarmed, the doors flew open, and there entered half-a-dozen of the most hideous phantoms that I had ever seen (even in a dream) before that time. They came in two by two, though matched in the most dissociable manner, and mingled together in a kind of dance. It would be tedious to describe their habits and persons, for which reason I shall only inform my

reader that the first couple were Tyranny and Anarchy, the second were Bigotry and Atheism, the third, the genius of a Commonwealth and a young man of about twenty-two years of age,<sup>1</sup> whose name I could not learn. He had a sword in his right hand, which in the dance he often brandished at the Act of Settlement; and a citizen, who stood by me, whispered in my ear, that he saw a sponge in his left hand. The dance of so many jarring natures put me in mind of the sun, moon, and earth, in the *Rehearsal*,<sup>2</sup> that danced together for no other end but to eclipse one another.

The reader will easily suppose, by what has been before said, that the lady on the throne would have been almost frightened to distraction, had she seen but any one of these spectres; what then must have been her condition when she saw them all in a body? She fainted and died away at the sight.

*Et neque jam color est misto candore rubori ;  
Nec vigor, et vires, et quae modo visa placebant :  
Nec corpus remanet—* Ov. Met. lib. iii.

There was as great a change in the hill of money bags and the heaps of money, the former shrinking, and falling into so many empty bags, that I now found not above a tenth part of them had been filled with money. The rest that took up the same space, and

<sup>1</sup> James, the Elder Pretender, son and heir of James II. He brandished his sword against the Act of Settlement because that Act (passed in 1701) excluded him from the throne.

<sup>2</sup> A famous comedy written by the Duke of Buckingham.

made the same figure as the bags that were really filled with money, had been blown up with air, and called into my memory the bags full of wind, which Homer tells us his hero received as a present from Aeolus. The great heaps of gold, on either side of the throne, now appeared to be only heaps of paper, or little piles of notched sticks,<sup>1</sup> bound up together in bundles, like Bath faggots.

Whilst I was lamenting this sudden desolation that had been made before me, the whole scene vanished : in the room of the frightful spectres, there now entered a second dance of apparitions<sup>2</sup> very agreeably matched together, and made up of very amiable phantoms. The first pair was Liberty with Monarchy<sup>3</sup> at her right hand ; the second was Moderation leading in Religion ; and the third a person whom I had never seen,<sup>2</sup> with the genius of Great Britain. At their first entrance the lady revived, the bags swelled to their former bulk, the pile of faggots and heaps of paper changed into pyramids of guineas : and for my own part I was so transported with joy, that I awaked ; though I must confess I would fain have fallen asleep again to have closed my vision, if I could have done it.

*The Spectator*, No. 3.

Saturday, March 3, 1711.

<sup>1</sup> Exchequer tallies. Some of them are preserved and exhibited in the Houses of Parliament.

<sup>2</sup> The Elector of Hanover, afterwards George I. of England.

## XXVIII

*The Italian Opera*

*Spectatum admissi risum teneatis?*—HOR.

AN opera may be allowed to be extravagantly lavish in its decorations, as its only design is to gratify the senses, and keep up an indolent attention in the audience. Common sense however requires, that there should be nothing in the scenes and machines which may appear childish and absurd. How would the wits of King Charles's time have laughed to have seen Nicolini exposed to a tempest in robes of ermine, and sailing in an open boat upon a sea of pasteboard? What a field of raillery would they have been let into, had they been entertained with painted dragons spitting wildfire, enchanted chariots drawn by Flanders mares, and real cascades in artificial landscapes? A little skill in criticism would inform us, that shadows and realities ought not to be mixed together in the same piece; and that scenes which are designed as the representations of nature, should be filled with resemblances, and not with the things themselves. If one would represent a wide champaign country filled with herds and flocks, it would be ridiculous to draw the country only upon the scenes, and to crowd several parts of the stage with sheep and oxen. This is joining together inconsistencies, and making the decoration partly real and partly imaginary. I would

recommend what I have here said to the directors, as well as to the admirers, of our modern opera.

As I was walking in the streets about a fortnight ago, I saw an ordinary fellow carrying a cage full of little birds upon his shoulder; and, as I was wondering with myself what use he would put them to, he was met very luckily by an acquaintance, who had the same curiosity. Upon his asking him what he had upon his shoulder, he told him that he had been buying sparrows for the opera. "Sparrows for the opera," says his friend, licking his lips, "what, are they to be roasted?" "No, no," says the other, "they are to enter towards the end of the first act, and to fly about the stage."

This strange dialogue awakened my curiosity so far, that I immediately bought the opera, by which means I perceived the sparrows were to act the part of singing birds in a delightful grove; though, upon a nearer inquiry, I found the sparrows put the same trick upon the audience that Sir Martin Mar-all practised upon his mistress; for, though they flew in sight, the music proceeded from a concert of flageolets and bird-calls which was planted behind the scenes. At the same time I made this discovery, I found by the discourse of the actors that there were great designs on foot for the improvement of the opera; that it had been proposed to break down a part of the wall, and to surprise the audience with a party of an hundred horse; and that there was actually a project of bringing the New River into the house, to be

employed in jetteaus and water-works. This project, as I have since heard, is postponed till the summer season ; when it is thought the coolness that proceeds from fountains and cascades will be more acceptable and refreshing to people of quality. In the meantime, to find out a more agreeable entertainment for the winter season, the opera of *Rinaldo* is filled with thunder and lightning, illuminations and fireworks ; which the audience may look upon without catching cold, and indeed without much danger of being burnt ; for there are several engines filled with water, and ready to play at a minute's warning, in case any such accident should happen. However, as I have a very great friendship for the owner of this theatre, I hope that he has been wise enough to insure his house before he would let this opera be acted in it.

It is no wonder that those scenes should be very surprising, which were contrived by two poets of different nations, and raised by two magicians of different sexes. Armida (as we are told in the argument) was an Amazonian enchantress, and poor Signior Cassani (as we learn from the persons represented) a Christian conjurer (Mago Christiano). I must confess I am very much puzzled to find how an Amazon should be versed in the black art ; or how a good Christian (for such is the part of the magician) should deal with the devil.

To consider the poets after the conjurers, I shall give you a taste of the Italian, from the first lines of his preface : *Eccoti, benigno lettore, un parto di poche sere, che se ben nato di notte, non è però aborto di tenebre,*

*mà si farà conoscere figlio d' Apollo con qualche raggio di Parnasse.* "Behold, gentle reader, the birth of a few evenings, which, though it be the offspring of the night, is not the abortive of darkness, but will make itself known to be the son of Apollo, with a certain ray of Parnassus." He afterwards proceeds to call Mynheer Hendel<sup>1</sup> the Orpheus of our age, and to acquaint us, in the same sublimity of style, that he composed this opera in a fortnight. Such are the wits, to whose tastes we so ambitiously conform ourselves. The truth of it is, the finest writers among the modern Italians express themselves in such a florid form of words, and such tedious circumlocutions, as are used by none but pedants in our own country; and at the same time fill their writings with such poor imaginations and conceits, as our youths are ashamed of before they have been two years at the university. Some may be apt to think that it is the difference of genius which produces this difference in the works of the two nations; but to show there is nothing in this, if we look into the writings of the old Italians, such as Cicero and Virgil, we shall find that the English writers, in their way of thinking and expressing themselves, resemble those authors much more than the modern Italians pretend

<sup>1</sup> Handel came to England at the end of 1710. The opera of *Rinaldo and Armida*, which Addison ridicules, was the first of the long list of operas which the great musician composed for the English stage. Fortunately the raillery of the English wit seems to have produced no effect on the taste of the English public. *Rinaldo* was produced with unprecedented magnificence at the Queen's Theatre on Saturday, February 24, 1711, and ran till the end of the season (June 2).



to do. And as for the poet himself, from whom the dreams of this opera are taken, I must entirely agree with Monsieur Boileau, that one verse in Virgil is worth all the clinquant or tinsel of Tasso.

But to return to the sparrows ; there have been so many flights of them let loose in this opera, that it is feared the house will never get rid of them ; and that in other plays they may make their entrance in very wrong and improper scenes, so as to be seen flying in a lady's bed-chamber, or perching upon a king's throne ; besides the inconveniences which the heads of the audience may sometimes suffer from them. I am credibly informed, that there was once a design of casting into an opera the story of Whittington and his cat, and that in order to it, there had been got together a great quantity of mice ; but Mr. Rich, the proprietor of the playhouse, very prudently considered that it would be impossible for the cat to kill them all, and that consequently the princes of his stage might be as much infested with mice, as the prince of the island was before the cat's arrival upon it ; for which reason he would not permit it to be acted in his house. And indeed I cannot blame him ; for, as he said very well upon that occasion, I do not hear that any of the performers in our opera pretend to equal the famous piper, who made all the mice of a great town in Germany follow his music, and by that means cleared the place of those little noxious animals.

Before I dismiss this paper, I must inform my reader, that I hear there is a treaty on foot with London and

Wise (who will be appointed gardeners of the play-house) to furnish the opera of *Rinaldo and Armida* with an orange-grove ; and that the next time it is acted, the singing birds will be personated by tom-tits : the undertakers being resolved to spare neither pains nor money for the gratification of the audience.

*The Spectator*, No. 5.

Tuesday, March 6, 1711.

## XXIX

### *Superstition*

*Somnia, terrores magicos, miracula, sagas,  
Nocturnos lemures, portentaque Thessala Vides ?*

HOR.

GOING yesterday to dine with an old acquaintance, I had the misfortune to find his whole family very much dejected. Upon asking him the occasion of it, he told me that his wife had dreamt a strange dream the night before, which they were afraid portended some misfortune to themselves or to their children. At her coming into the room, I observed a settled melancholy in her countenance, which I should have been troubled for, had I not heard from whence it proceeded. We were no sooner sat down, but, after having looked upon me a little while, "My dear," says she, turning to her husband, "you may now see the stranger that was in the candle last night." Soon after this, as they began to talk of family affairs, a little boy at the lower end of the table told her, that

he was to go into join-hand on Thursday. "Thursday?" says she. "No, child, if it please God, you shall not begin upon Childermas-day; tell your writing-master that Friday will be soon enough." I was reflecting with myself on the oddness of her fancy, and wondering that anybody would establish it as a rule to lose a day in every week. In the midst of these my musings, she desired me to reach her a little salt upon the point of my knife, which I did in such a trepidation and hurry of obedience, that I let it drop by the way; at which she immediately startled, and said it fell towards her. Upon this I looked very blank; and, observing the concern of the whole table, began to consider myself, with some confusion, as a person that had brought a disaster upon the family. The lady however recovering herself, after a little space, said to her husband with a sigh, "My dear, misfortunes never come single." My friend, I found, acted but an under part at his table, and being a man of more good-nature than understanding, thinks himself obliged to fall in with all the passions and humours of his yoke-fellow. "Do not you remember, child," says she, "that the pigeon-house fell the very afternoon that our careless wench spilt the salt upon the table?" "Yes," says he, "my dear, and the next post brought us an account of the battle of Almanza."<sup>1</sup> The reader may

<sup>1</sup> On April 25, 1707, the English and Portuguese forces in Spain, commanded by the Earl of Galway, were severely defeated by the French and Spanish forces under the Duke of Berwick. As the Earl of Galway (second Marquis de Ruigny) was an exiled Huguenot, and the Duke of Berwick, a natural son of

guess at the figure I made, after having done all this mischief. I dispatched my dinner as soon as I could, with my usual taciturnity ; when, to my utter confusion, the lady seeing me quitting my knife and fork, and laying them across one another upon my plate, desired me that I would humour her so far as to take them out of that figure, and place them side by side. What the absurdity was which I had committed I did not know, but I suppose there was some traditionary superstition in it ; and therefore, in obedience to the lady of the house, I disposed of my knife and fork in two parallel lines, which is the figure I shall always lay them in for the future, though I do not know any reason for it.

It is not difficult for a man to see that a person has conceived an aversion to him. For my own part, I quickly found, by the lady's looks, that she regarded me as a very odd kind of fellow, with an unfortunate aspect ; for which reason I took my leave immediately after dinner, and withdrew to my own lodgings. Upon my return home, I fell into a profound contemplation on the evils that attend these superstitious follies of mankind ; how they subject us to imaginary afflictions, and additional sorrows, that do not properly come within our lot. As if the natural calamities of life were not sufficient for it, we turn the most indifferent

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James II., was an exiled Englishman, the battle of Almanza is the only battle on record in which an English general at the head of a French army defeated an English army commanded by a Frenchman.

circumstances into misfortunes, and suffer as much from trifling accidents as from real evils. I have known the shooting of a star spoil a night's rest ; and have seen a man in love grow pale and lose his appetite, upon the plucking of a merry-thought. A screech-owl at midnight has alarmed a family more than a band of robbers : nay, the voice of a cricket hath struck more terror than the roaring of a lion. There is nothing so inconsiderable which may not appear dreadful to an imagination that is filled with omens and prognostics. A rusty nail, or a crooked pin, shoot up into prodigies.

I remember I was once in a mixt assembly, that was full of noise and mirth, when on a sudden an old woman unluckily observed there were thirteen of us in company. This remark struck a panic terror into several who were present, insomuch that one or two of the ladies were going to leave the room ; but a friend of mine, taking notice that one of our female companions was big with child, affirmed there were fourteen in the room, and that, instead of portending one of the company should die, it plainly foretold one of them should be born. Had not my friend found this expedient to break the omen, I question not but half the women in the company would have fallen sick that very night.

An old maid, that is troubled with the vapours, produces infinite disturbances of this kind among her friends and neighbours. I know a maiden aunt, of a great family, who is one of these antiquated Sibyls, that forebodes and prophesies from one end of the year to the other. She is always seeing apparitions and hearing

death-watches ; and was the other day almost frightened out of her wits by the great house-dog, that howled in the stable at a time when she lay ill of the tooth-ache. Such an extravagant cast of mind engages multitudes of people, not only in impertinent terrors, but in super-numerary duties of life, and arises from that fear and ignorance which are natural to the soul of man. The horror with which we entertain the thoughts of death (or indeed of any future evil), and the uncertainty of its approach, fill a melancholy mind with innumerable apprehensions and suspicions, and consequently dispose it to the observation of such groundless prodigies and predictions. For as it is the chief concern of wise men to retrench the evils of life by the reasonings of philosophy, it is the employment of fools to multiply them by the sentiments of superstition.

For my own part, I should be very much troubled were I endowed with this divining quality, though it should inform me truly of everything that can befall me. I would not anticipate the relish of any happiness, nor feel the weight of any misery, before it actually arrives.

I know but one way of fortifying my soul against these gloomy presages and terrors of mind, and that is, by securing to myself the friendship and protection of that Being who disposes of events and governs futurity. He sees at one view the whole thread of my existence, not only that part of it which I have already passed through, but that which runs forward into all the depths of eternity. When I lay me down to sleep, I recommend myself to his care ; when I awake, I give

myself up to his direction. Amidst all the evils that threaten me, I will look up to him for help, and question not but he will either avert them, or turn them to my advantage. Though I know neither the time nor the manner of the death I am to die, I am not at all solicitous about it ; because I am sure that he knows them both, and that he will not fail to comfort and support me under them.

*The Spectator*, No. 7.

Thursday, March 8, 1711.

### XXX

#### *Clubs*

*Tigris agit rabida cum tigride pacem  
Perpetuam, saevis inter se convenit ursis.*—JUV.

MAN is said to be a sociable animal, and, as an instance of it, we may observe, that we take all occasions and pretences of forming ourselves into those little nocturnal assemblies, which are commonly known by the name of clubs. When a set of men find themselves agree in any particular, though never so trivial, they establish themselves into a kind of fraternity, and meet once or twice a week, upon the account of such a fantastic resemblance. I know a considerable market-town in which there was a club of fat men that did not come together (as you may well suppose) to entertain one another with sprightliness and wit, but to keep one another in countenance : the room where the club met was some-

thing of the largest, and had two entrances, the one by a door of moderate size, and the other by a pair of folding doors. If a candidate for this corpulent club could make his entrance through the first, he was looked upon as unqualified ; but if he stuck in the passage, and could not force his way through it, the folding doors were immediately thrown open for his reception, and he was saluted as a brother. I have heard that this club, though it consisted but of fifteen persons, weighed above three ton.

In opposition to this society, there sprung up another composed of scarecrows and skeletons, who, being very meagre and envious, did all they could to thwart the designs of their bulky brethren, whom they represented as men of dangerous principles ; till at length they worked them out of the favour of the people, and consequently out of the magistracy. These factions tore the corporation in pieces for several years, till at length they came to this accommodation ; that the two bailiffs of the town should be annually chosen out of the two clubs ; by which means the principal magistrates are at this day coupled like rabbits, one fat and one lean.

Every one has heard of the club, or rather the confederacy, of the Kings. This grand alliance was formed a little after the return of King Charles the Second, and admitted into it men of all qualities and professions, provided they agreed in this surname of King, which, as they imagined, sufficiently declared the owners of it to be altogether untainted with republican and anti-monarchical principles.



A Christian name has likewise been often used as a badge of distinction, and made the occasion of a club. That of the Georges, which used to meet at the sign of the George on St. George's Day, and swear "Before George," is still fresh in every one's memory.

There are at present in several parts of this city what they call Street Clubs, in which the chief inhabitants of the street converse together every night. I remember, upon my inquiring after lodgings in Ormond Street, the landlord, to recommend that quarter of the town, told me there was at that time a very good club in it; he also told me, upon further discourse with him, that two or three noisy country squires, who were settled there the year before, had considerably sunk the price of house rent; and that the club (to prevent the like inconveniences for the future) had thoughts of taking every house that became vacant into their own hands, till they had found a tenant for it of a sociable nature and good conversation.

The Hum-Drum Club, of which I was formerly an unworthy member, was made up of very honest gentlemen, of peaceable dispositions, that used to sit together, smoke their pipes, and say nothing till midnight. The Mum Club (as I am informed) is an institution of the same nature, and as great an enemy to noise.

After these two innocent societies, I cannot forbear mentioning a very mischievous one, that was erected in the reign of King Charles the Second: I mean the Club of Duellists, in which none was to be admitted that had not fought his man. The president of it was said to

have killed half a dozen in single combat ; and as for the other members, they took their seats according to the number of their slain. There was likewise a side-table for such as had only drawn blood, and shown a laudable ambition of taking the first opportunity to qualify themselves for the first table. This club, consisting only of men of honour, did not continue long, most of the members of it being put to the sword, or hanged, a little after its institution.

Our modern celebrated clubs are founded upon eating and drinking, which are points wherein most men agree, and in which the learned and illiterate, the dull and the airy, the philosopher and the buffoon, can all of them bear a part. The Kit-Cat itself is said to have taken its original from a mutton-pie. The Beef-steak and October Clubs are neither of them averse to eating and drinking, if we may form a judgment of them from their respective titles.

When men are thus knit together by a love of society, not a spirit of faction, and do not meet to censure or annoy those that are absent, but to enjoy one another ; when they are thus combined for their own improvement, or for the good of others, or at least to relax themselves from the business of the day, by an innocent and cheerful conversation, there may be something very useful in these little institutions and establishments.

I cannot forbear concluding this paper with a scheme of laws that I met with upon a wall in a little ale-house : how I came thither I may inform my reader at a more convenient time. These laws were enacted by a knot

of artisans and mechanics, who used to meet every night ; and as there is something in them which gives us a pretty picture of low life, I shall transcribe them word for word.

*RULES to be observed in the Two-penny Club, erected in this place for the preservation of friendship and good neighbourhood.*

I. Every member at his first coming in shall lay down his two-pence.

II. Every member shall fill his pipe out of his own box.

III. If any member absents himself, he shall forfeit a penny for the use of the club, unless in case of sickness or imprisonment.

IV. If any member swears or curses, his neighbour may give him a kick upon the shins.

V. If any member tells stories in the club that are not true, he shall forfeit for every third lie an halfpenny.

VI. If any member strikes another wrongfully, he shall pay his club for him.

VII. If any member brings his wife into the club, he shall pay for whatever she drinks or smokes.

VIII. If any member's wife comes to fetch him home from the club, she shall speak to him without the door.

IX. If any member calls another cuckold, he shall be turned out of the club.

X. None shall be admitted into the club that is of the same trade with any member of it.

XI. None of the club shall have his clothes or shoes made or mended but by a brother member.

XII. No Nonjuror shall be capable of being a member.

The morality of this little club is guarded by such wholesome laws and penalties, that I question not but my reader will be as well pleased with them as he would have been with the *Leges Convivales* of Ben Jonson, the regulations of an old Roman club cited by Lipsius, or the rules of a Symposium in an ancient Greek author.

*The Spectator*, No. 9.

Saturday, March 10, 1711.

### XXXI

#### *The Spectator to his Readers*

*Non aliter quam qui adverso vix flumine lembum  
Remigus subigit : si brachia forte remisit,  
Atque illum in praeceps prono rapit alveus amni.*—VIRG.

It is with much satisfaction that I hear this great city inquiring day by day after these my papers, and receiving my morning lectures with a becoming seriousness and attention. My publisher tells me that there are already three thousand of them distributed every day : so that if I allow twenty readers to every paper, which I look upon as a modest computation, I may reckon about threescore thousand disciples in London and Westminster, who I hope will take care to distinguish themselves from the thoughtless herd of their ignorant

and unattentive brethren. Since I have raised to myself so great an audience, I shall spare no pains to make their instruction agreeable, and their diversion useful. For which reasons I shall endeavour to enliven morality with wit, and to temper wit with morality, that my readers may, if possible, both ways find their account in the speculation of the day. And to the end that their virtue and discretion may not be short, transient, intermitting starts of thought, I have resolved to refresh their memories from day to day, till I have recovered them out of that desperate state of vice and folly into which the age is fallen. The mind that lies fallow but a single day, sprouts up in follies that are only to be killed by a constant and assiduous culture. It was said of Socrates, that he brought Philosophy down from heaven to inhabit among men; and I shall be ambitious to have it said of me, that I have brought Philosophy out of closets and libraries, schools and colleges, to dwell in clubs and assemblies, at tea-tables and in coffee-houses.

I would therefore in a very particular manner recommend these my speculations to all well-regulated families, that set apart an hour in every morning for tea and bread and butter; and would earnestly advise them for their good to order this paper to be punctually served up, and to be looked upon as a part of the tea equipage.

Sir Francis Bacon observes that a well-written book, compared with its rivals and antagonists, is like Moses's serpent, that immediately swallowed up and devoured

those of the Egyptians. I shall not be so vain as to think, that where the *SPECTATOR* appears, the other public prints will vanish; but shall leave it to my readers' consideration, whether is it not, much better to be let into the knowledge of one's self, than to hear what passes in Muscovy or Poland; and to amuse ourselves with such writings as tend to the wearing out of ignorance, passion, and prejudice, than such as naturally conduce to inflame hatreds and make enmities irreconcilable?

In the next place, I would recommend this paper to the daily perusal of those gentlemen whom I cannot but consider as my good brothers and allies, I mean the fraternity of Spectators who live in the world without having anything to do in it; and either by the affluence of their fortunes, or laziness of their dispositions, have no other business with the rest of mankind but to look upon them. Under this class of men are comprehended all contemplative tradesmen, titular physicians, Fellows of the Royal Society, Templars that are not given to be contentious, and statesmen that are out of business; in short, every one that considers the world as a theatre, and desires to form a right judgment of those who are the actors on it.

There is another set of men that I must likewise lay a claim to, whom I have lately called the blanks of society, as being altogether unfurnished with ideas, till the business and conversation of the day has supplied them. I have often considered these poor souls with an eye of great commiseration, when I have heard them asking

the first man they have met with, whether there was any news stirring? and by that means gathering together materials for thinking. These needy persons do not know what to talk of till about twelve o'clock in the morning; for by that time they are pretty good judges of the weather, know which way the wind sits, and whether the Dutch mail be come in. As they lie at the mercy of the first man they meet, and are grave or impertinent all the day long, according to the notions which they have imbibed in the morning, I would earnestly entreat them not to stir out of their chambers till they have read this paper, and do promise them that I will daily instil into them such sound and wholesome sentiments, as shall have a good effect on their conversation for the ensuing twelve hours.

But there are none to whom this paper will be more useful than to the female world. I have often thought there has not been sufficient pains taken in finding out proper employments and diversions for the fair ones. Their amusements seem contrived for them, rather as they are women, than as they are reasonable creatures; and are more adapted to the sex than to the species. The toilet is their great scene of business, and the right adjusting of their hair the principal employment of their lives. The sorting of a suit of ribbons is reckoned a very good morning's work; and if they make an excursion to a mercer's or a toy-shop, so great a fatigue makes them unfit for anything else all the day after. Their more serious occupations are sewing and embroidery, and their greatest drudgery the preparation

of jellies and sweetmeats. This, I say, is the state of ordinary women ; though I know there are multitudes of those of a more elevated life and conversation, that move in an exalted sphere of knowledge and virtue, that join all the beauties of the mind to the ornaments of dress, and inspire a kind of awe and respect, as well as love, into their male beholders. I hope to increase the number of these by publishing this daily paper, which I shall always endeavour to make an innocent if not an improving entertainment, and by that means at least divert the minds of my female readers from greater trifles. At the same time, as I would fain give some finishing touches to those which are already the most beautiful pieces in human nature, I shall endeavour to point out all those imperfections that are the blemishes, as well as those virtues which are the embellishments, of the sex. In the meanwhile I hope these my gentle readers, who have so much time on their hands, will not grudge throwing away a quarter of an hour in a day on this paper, since they may do it without any hindrance to business.

I know several of my friends and well-wishers are in great pain for me, lest I should not be able to keep up the spirit of a paper which I oblige myself to furnish every day : but to make them easy in this particular, I will promise them faithfully to give it over as soon as I grow dull. This I know will be matter of great raillery to the small wits ; who will frequently put me in mind of my promise, desire me to keep my word, assure me that it is high time to give over, with many other little



pleasantries of the like nature, which men of a little smart genius cannot forbear throwing out against their best friends, when they have such a handle given them of being witty. But let them remember that I do hereby enter my caveat against this piece of raillery.

*The Spectator*, No. 10.

Monday, March 12, 1711.

## XXXII

### *The Spectator in his Lodgings*

—*Veteres avias tibi de pulmone revello.*—PERS.

AT my coming to London, it was some time before I could settle myself in a house to my liking. I was forced to quit my first lodgings by reason of an officious landlady, that would be asking me every morning how I had slept. I then fell into an honest family, and lived very happily for above a week ; when my landlord, who was a jolly good-natured man, took it into his head that I wanted company, and therefore would frequently come into my chamber to keep me from being alone. This I bore for two or three days ; but telling me one day that he was afraid I was melancholy, I thought it was high time for me to be gone, and accordingly took new lodgings that very night. About a week after, I found my jolly landlord, who, as I said before, was an honest hearty man, had put me into an advertisement of the *Daily Courant*, in the following words : “Whereas a melancholy man left his lodgings on Thursday last in

the afternoon, and was afterwards seen going towards Islington ; if any one can give notice of him to R. B., Fishmonger in the Strand, he shall be very well rewarded for his pains." As I am the best man in the world to keep my own counsel, and my landlord the fishmonger 'not knowing my name, this accident of my life was never discovered to this very day.

I am now settled with a widow-woman, who has a great many children, and complies with my humour in everything. I do not remember that we have exchanged a word together these five years ; my coffee comes into my chamber every morning without asking for it ; if I want fire I point to my chimney, if water, to my basin : upon which my landlady nods, as much as to say she takes my meaning, and immediately obeys my signals. She has likewise modelled her family so well, that when her little boy offers to pull me by the coat or prattle in my face, his eldest sister immediately calls him off and bids him not to disturb the Gentleman. At my first entering into the family, I was troubled with the civility of their rising up to me every time I came into the room ; but my landlady, observing that upon these occasions I always cried pish and went out again, has forbidden any such ceremony to be used in the house ; so that at present I walk into the kitchen or parlour without being taken notice of, or giving any interruption to the business or discourse of the family. The maid will ask her mistress (though I am by) whether the Gentleman is ready to go to dinner, as the mistress (who is indeed an excellent housewife) scolds at the

servants as heartily before my face as behind my back. In short, I move up and down the house and enter into all companies, with the same liberty as a cat or any other domestic animal, and am as little suspected of telling anything that I hear or see.

I remember last winter there were several young girls of the neighbourhood sitting about the fire with my landlady's daughters, and telling stories of spirits and apparitions. Upon my opening the door the young women broke off their discourse, but my landlady's daughters telling them that it was nobody but the Gentleman (for that is the name which I go by in the neighbourhood as well as in the family), they went on without minding me. I seated myself by the candle that stood on a table at one end of the room; and pretending to read a book that I took out of my pocket, heard several dreadful stories of ghosts as pale as ashes that had stood at the feet of a bed, or walked over a churchyard by moonlight; and of others that had been conjured into the Red Sea for disturbing people's rest, and drawing their curtains at midnight; with many other old women's fables of the like nature. As one spirit raised another, I observed that at the end of every story the whole company closed their ranks and crowded about the fire: I took notice in particular of a little boy, who was so attentive to every story, that I am mistaken if he ventures to go to bed by himself this twelvemonth. Indeed they talked so long, that the imaginations of the whole assembly were manifestly crazed, and I am sure will be the worse for it as long as

they live. I heard one of the girls, that had looked upon me over her shoulder, asking the company how long I had been in the room, and whether I did not look paler than I used to do. This put me under some apprehensions that I should be forced to explain myself if I did not retire; for which reason I took the candle in my hand and went up into my chamber, not without wondering at this unaccountable weakness in reasonable creatures, that they should love to astonish and terrify one another. Were I a father, I should take a particular care to preserve my children from these little horrors of imagination, which they are apt to contract when they are young, and are not able to shake off when they are in years. I have known a soldier that has entered a breach, affrighted at his own shadow, and look pale upon a little scratching at his door, who the day before had marched up against a battery of cannon. There are instances of persons, who have been terrified even to distraction at the figure of a tree or the shaking of a bullrush. The truth of it is, I look upon a sound imagination as the greatest blessing of life, next to a clear judgment and a good conscience. In the meantime, since there are very few whose minds are not more or less subject to these dreadful thoughts and apprehensions, we ought to arm ourselves against them by the dictates of reason and religion, "to pull the old woman out of our hearts" (as Persius expresses it in the motto of my paper), and extinguish those impertinent notions which we imbibed at a time that we were not able to judge of their absurdity. Or if we

believe, as many wise and good men have done, that there are such phantoms and apparitions as those I have been speaking of, let us endeavour to establish to ourselves an interest in him who holds the reins of the whole creation in his hand, and moderates them after such a manner, that it is impossible for one being to break loose upon another without his knowledge and permission.

For my own part, I am apt to join in opinion with those who believe that all the regions of nature swarm with spirits ; and that we have multitudes of spectators on all our actions, when we think ourselves most alone : but instead of terrifying myself with such a notion, I am wonderfully pleased to think that I am always engaged with such an innumerable society in searching out the wonders of the creation, and joining in the same concert of praise and adoration.

Milton has finely described this mixed communion of men and spirits in Paradise ; and had doubtless his eye upon a verse in old Hesiod, which is almost word for word the same with his third line in the following passage.

—Nor think, though men were none,  
That Heaven would want spectators, God want praise :  
Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth  
Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep ;  
All these with ceaseless praise his works behold  
Both day and night. How often from the steep  
Of echoing hill or thicket, have we heard  
Celestial voices to the midnight air,  
Sole or responsive each to other's note,  
Singing their great Creator ! Oft in bands,

While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk,  
 With heavenly touch of instrumental sounds  
 In full harmonic number joined, their songs  
 Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to heaven.

*The Spectator*, No. 12.

Wednesday, March 14, 1711.

### XXXIII

#### *The Lions at the Haymarket*

*Dic mihi, si fueris tu Leo, qualis eris ?*—MART.

THERE is nothing that of late years has afforded matter of greater amusement to the town than Signior Nicolini's combat with a lion in the Haymarket, which has been very often exhibited to the general satisfaction of most of the nobility and gentry in the kingdom of Great Britain. Upon the first rumour of this intended combat, it was confidently affirmed, and is still believed by many in both galleries, that there would be a tame lion sent from the Tower every opera night, in order to be killed by Hydaspes ; this report, though altogether groundless, so universally prevailed in the upper regions of the playhouse, that some of the most refined politicians in those parts of the audience gave it out in whisper, that the lion was a cousin-german of the tiger who made his appearance in King William's days, and that the stage would be supplied with lions at the public expense during the whole session. Many likewise were the conjectures of the treatment which this lion was to meet with from the hands of Signior Nicolini :

some supposed that he was to subdue him in *recreativo*, as Orpheus used to serve the wild beasts in his time, and afterwards to knock him on the head; some fancied that the lion would not pretend to lay his paws upon the hero, by reason of the received opinion that a lion will not hurt a virgin: several, who pretended to have seen the opera in Italy, had informed their friends, that the lion was to act a part in High-Dutch, and roar twice or thrice to a thorough-bass, before he fell at the feet of Hydaspes. To clear up a matter that was so variously reported, I have made it my business to examine whether this pretended lion is really the savage he appears to be, or only a counterfeit.

But before I communicate my discoveries, I must acquaint the reader, that upon my walking behind the scenes last winter, as I was thinking on something else, I accidentally jostled against a monstrous animal that extremely startled me, and, upon my nearer survey of it, appeared to be a lion rampant. The lion, seeing me very much surprised, told me, in a gentle voice, that I might come by him if I pleased: "For," says he, "I do not intend to hurt anybody." I thanked him very kindly and passed by him; and in a little time after saw him leap upon the stage, and act his part with very great applause. It has been observed by several, that the lion has changed his manner of acting twice or thrice since his first appearance; which will not seem strange, when I acquaint my reader that the lion has been changed upon the audience three several times.

The first lion was a candle-snuffer, who being a fellow of a testy, choleric temper, overdid his part, and would not suffer himself to be killed so easily as he ought to have done ; besides, it was observed of him, that he grew more surly every time he came out of the lion ; and having dropt some words in ordinary conversation, as if he had not fought his best, and that he suffered himself to be thrown upon his back in the scuffle, and that he would wrestle with Mr. Nicolini for what he pleased, out of his lion's skin, it was thought proper to discard him : and it is verily believed to this day, that had he been brought upon the stage another time, he would certainly have done mischief. Besides, it was objected against the first lion, that he reared himself so high upon his hinder paws, and walked in so erect a posture, that he looked more like an old man than a lion.

The second lion was a tailor by trade, who belonged to the playhouse, and had the character of a mild and peaceable man in his profession. If the former was too furious, this was too sheepish, for his part ; inso-much that after a short modest walk upon the stage, he would fall at the first touch of Hydaspes, without grappling with him, and giving him an opportunity of showing his variety of Italian trips : it is said, indeed, that he once gave him a rip in his flesh-coloured doublet, but this was only to make work for himself, in his private character of a tailor. I must not omit that it was this second lion who treated me with so much humanity behind the scenes.



The acting lion at present is, as I am informed, a country gentleman, who does it for his diversion, but desires his name may be concealed. He says very handsomely in his own excuse, that he does not act for gain, that he indulges an innocent pleasure in it, and that it is better to pass away an evening in this manner than in gaming and drinking : but at the same time says, with a very agreeable raillery upon himself, that if his name should be known, the ill-natured world might call him " the ass in the lion's skin." This gentleman's temper is made out of such a happy mixture of the mild and the cholerick, that he outdoes both his predecessors, and has drawn together greater audiences than have been known in the memory of man.

I must not conclude my narrative without taking notice of a groundless report that has been raised to a gentleman's disadvantage, of whom I must declare myself an admirer ; namely, that Signior Nicolini and the lion have been seen sitting peaceably by one another, and smoking a pipe together behind the scenes ; by which their common enemies would insinuate, that it is but a sham combat which they represent upon the stage : but upon inquiry I find, that if any such correspondence has passed between them, it was not till the combat was over, when the lion was to be looked upon as dead, according to the received rules of the drama. Besides, this is what is practised every day in Westminster Hall, where nothing is more usual than to see a couple of lawyers, who have been tearing each other

to pick out the court, embracing one another as soon as they are out of it.

I would not be thought, in any part of this relation, to reflect upon Signior Nicolini, who in acting this part only complies with the wretched taste of his audience ; he knows very well that the lion has many more admirers than himself ; as they say of the famous equestrian statue on the Pont Neuf at Paris, that more people go to see the horse than the king who sits upon it. On the contrary, it gives me a just indignation to see a person whose action gives new majesty to kings, resolution to heroes, and softness to lovers, thus sinking from the greatness of his behaviour, and degraded into the character of the London Prentice. I have often wished that our tragedians would copy after this great master in action. Could they make the same use of their arms and legs, and inform their faces with as significant looks and passions, how glorious would an English tragedy appear with that action which is capable of giving a dignity to the forced thoughts, cold conceits, and unnatural expressions of an Italian opera ! In the meantime, I have related this combat of the lion to show what are at present the reigning entertainments of the politer part of Great Britain.

Audiences have often been reproached by writers for the coarseness of their taste ; but our present grievance does not seem to be the want of a good taste, but of common sense.

## XXXIV

τ *The Learned Professions*

—*Locus est et pluribus umbris.*—HOR.

I AM sometimes very much troubled, when I reflect upon the three great professions of divinity, law, and physic ; how they are each of them overburdened with practitioners, and filled with multitudes of ingenious gentlemen that starve one another.

We may divide the clergy into generals, field-officers, and subalterns. Among the first we may reckon bishops, dèans, and archdeacons. Among the second are doctors of divinity, prebendaries, and all that wear scarfs. The rest are comprehended under the subalterns. As for the first class, our constitution preserves it from any redundancy of incumbents, notwithstanding competitors are numberless. Upon a strict calculation, it is found that there has been a great exceeding of late years in the second division, several brevets having been granted for the 'converting of subalterns into scarf-officers ; insomuch that within my memory the price of lustring is raised above twopence in a yard. As for the subalterns, they are not to be numbered. Should our clergy once enter into the corrupt practice of the laity, by the splitting of their freeholds, they would be able to carry most of the elections in England.

The body of the law is no less encumbered with super-

fluous members, that are like Virgil's army, which he tells ~~us~~ was so crowded, many of them had not room to use their weapons. This prodigious society of men may be divided into the litigious and peaceable. Under the first are comprehended all those who are carried down in coachfuls to Westminster Hall every morning in term-time. Martial's description of this species of lawyers is full of humour :

*Iras et verba locant*

“ Men that hire out their words and anger ” ; that are more or less passionate according as they are paid for it, and allow their client a quantity of wrath proportionable to the fee which they receive from him. I must, however, observe to the reader, that above three parts of those whom I reckon among the litigious, are such as are only quarrelsome in their hearts, and have no opportunity of showing their passion at the bar. Nevertheless, as they do not know what strifes may arise, they appear at the hall every day, that they may show themselves in a readiness to enter the lists, whenever there shall be occasion for them.

The peaceable lawyers are, in the first place, many of the benchers of the several inns of court, who seem to be the dignitaries of the law, and are endowed with those qualifications of mind that accomplish a man rather for a ruler than a pleader. These men live peaceably in their habitations, eating once a day, and dancing once a year, for the honour of their respective societies.

Another numberless branch of peaceable lawyers are those young men, who, being placed at the inns of court in order to study the laws of their country, frequent the playhouse more than Westminster Hall, and are seen in all public assemblies except in a court of justice. I shall say nothing of those silent and busy multitudes that are employed within doors in the drawing up of writings and conveyances ; nor of those greater numbers that palliate their want of business with a pretence to such chamber-practice.

If, in the third place, we look into the profession of physic, we shall find a most formidable body of men : the sight of them is enough to make a man serious ; for we may lay it down as a maxim, that when a nation abounds in physicians, it grows thin of people. Sir William Temple is very much puzzled to find out a reason why the northern hive, as he calls it, does not send out such prodigious swarms, and overrun the world with Goths and Vandals, as it did formerly ; but had that excellent author observed that there were no students in physic among the subjects of Thor and Woden, and that this science very much flourishes in the north at present, he might have found a better solution for this difficulty than any of those he has made use of. This body of men, in our own country, may be described like the British army in Cæsar's time : some of them slay in chariots, and some on foot. If the infantry do less execution than the charioteers, it is because they cannot be carried so soon into all quarters of the town, and despatch so much business

in so short a time. Besides this body of regular troops, there are stragglers, who, without being duly listed and enrolled, do infinite mischief to those who are so unlucky as to fall into their hands.

There are, besides the above-mentioned, innumerable retainers to physic, who, for want of other patients, amuse themselves with the stifling of cats in an air-pump, cutting up dogs alive, or impaling of insects upon the point of a needle for microscopical observations ; besides those that are employed in the gathering of weeds and the chase of butterflies ; not to mention the cockleshell-merchants and spider-catchers.

When I consider how each of these professions are crowded with multitudes that seek their livelihood in them, and how many men of merit there are in each of them, who may be rather said to be of the science than the profession, I very much wonder at the humour of parents, who will not rather choose to place their sons in a way of life where an honest industry cannot but thrive, than in stations where the greatest probity, learning, and good sense may miscarry. How many men are country curates, that might have made themselves aldermen of London, by a right improvement of a smaller sum of money than what is usually laid out upon a learned education ! A sober, frugal person, of slender parts and a slow apprehension, might have thrived in trade, though he starves upon physic ; as a man would be well enough pleased to buy silks of one whom he would not venture to feel his pulse. Vagellius is careful, studious, and obliging, but withal

a little thick-skulled ; he has not a single client, but might have had abundance of customers. The misfortune is, that parents take a liking to a particular profession, and therefore desire their sons may be of it. Whereas, in so great an affair of life, they should consider the genius and abilities of their children more than their own inclinations.

It is the great advantage of a trading nation, that there are very few in it so dull and heavy, who may not be placed in stations of life which may give them an opportunity of making their fortunes. A well-regulated commerce is not, like law, physic, or divinity, to be overstocked with hands, but, on the contrary, flourishes by multitudes, and gives employment to all its professors. Fleets of merchantmen are so many squadrons of floating shops, that vend our wares and manufactures in all the markets of the world, and find out chapmen under both the tropics.

*The Spectator*, No. 21.

Saturday, March 24, 1711.

## XXXV

### *Lampoons*

*Sævit atrox Volscens, nec teli conspicit usquam  
Auctorem, nec quo se ardens immittere possit.*—VIRG.

THERE is nothing that more betrays a base, ungenerous spirit than the giving of secret stabs to a man's reputation. Lampoons and satires, that are written with wit and spirit, are like poisoned darts, which not only

inflict a wound, but make it incurable. For this reason I am very much troubled when I see the talents of humour and ridicule in the possession of an ill-natured man. There cannot be a greater gratification to a barbarous and inhuman wit, than to stir up sorrow in the heart of a private person, to raise uneasiness among near relations, and to expose whole families to derision, at the same time that he remains unseen and undiscovered. If, besides the accomplishments of being witty and ill-natured, a man is vicious into the bargain, he is one of the most mischievous creatures that can enter into a civil society. His satire will then chiefly fall upon those who ought to be the most exempt from it. Virtue, merit, and everything that is praiseworthy, will be made the subject of ridicule and buffoonery. It is impossible to enumerate the evils which arise from these arrows that fly in the dark, and I know no other excuse that is or can be made for them, than that the wounds they give are only imaginary, and produce nothing more than a secret shame or sorrow in the mind of the suffering person. It must indeed be confessed, that a lampoon or a satire do not carry in them robbery or murder; but at the same time, how many are there that would not rather lose a considerable sum of money, or even life itself, than be set up as a mark of infamy and derision? And in this case a man should consider, that an injury is not to be measured by the notions of him that gives, but of him that receives it.

Those who can put the best countenance upon the



outrages of this nature which are offered them, are not without their secret anguish. I have often observed a passage in Socrates's behaviour at his death, in a light wherein none of the critics have considered it. That excellent man, entertaining his friends, a little before he drank the bowl of poison, with a discourse on the immortality of the soul, at his entering upon it says, that he does not believe any the most comic genius can censure him for talking upon such a subject at such a time. This passage, I think, evidently glances upon Aristophanes, who writ a comedy on purpose to ridicule the discourses of that divine philosopher. It has been observed by many writers, that Socrates was so little moved at this piece of buffoonery, that he was several times present at its being acted upon the stage, and never expressed the least resentment of it. But, with submission, I think the remark I have here made shows us, that this unworthy treatment made an impression upon his mind, though he had been too wise to discover it.

When Julius Cæsar was lampooned by Catullus, he invited him to a supper, and treated him with such a generous civility, that he made the poet his friend ever after. Cardinal Mazarine gave the same kind of treatment to the learned Quillet, who had reflected upon his Eminence in a famous Latin poem. The cardinal sent for him, and, after some kind expostulations upon what he had written, assured him of his esteem, and dismissed him with a promise of the next good abbey that should fall, which he accordingly

conferred upon him in a few months after. This had so good an effect upon the author, that he dedicated the second edition of his book to the cardinal, after having expunged the passages which had given him offence.

Sextus Quintus was not of so generous and forgiving a temper. Upon his being made Pope, the statue Pasquin was one night dressed in a very dirty shirt, with an excuse written under it, that he was forced to wear foul linen, because his laundress was made a Princess. This was a reflection upon the Pope's sister, who, before the promotion of her brother, was in those mean circumstances that Pasquin represented her. As this pasquinade made a great noise in Rome, the Pope offered a considerable sum of money to any person that should discover the author of it. The author, relying upon his Holiness's generosity, as also on some private overtures which he had received from him, made the discovery himself; upon which the Pope gave him the reward he had promised, but at the same time, to disable the satirist for the future, ordered his tongue to be cut out, and both his hands to be chopped off. Aretine<sup>1</sup> is too trite an instance. Every one knows that all the kings of Europe were his tributaries. Nay, there is a letter of his extant, in which he makes his boasts that he had laid the Sophi of Persia under contribution.

Though, in the various examples which I have here

<sup>1</sup> Pietro Aretino (1492-1556), a scurrilous Italian satirist and sonneteer, who levied blackmail on princes and nobles.

drawn together, these several great men behaved themselves very differently towards the wits of the age who had reproached them, they all of them plainly showed that they were very sensible of their reproaches, and consequently that they received them as very great injuries. For my own part, I would never trust a man that I thought was capable of giving these secret wounds ; and cannot but think that he would hurt the person, whose reputation he thus assaults, in his body or in his fortune, could he do it with the same security. There is indeed something very barbarous and inhuman in the ordinary scribblers of lampoons. An innocent young lady shall be exposed, for an unhappy feature ; a father of a family turned to ridicule, for some domestic calamity ; a wife be made uneasy all her life, for a misinterpreted word or action ; nay, a good, a temperate, and a just man shall be put out of countenance, by the representation of those qualities that should do him honour. So pernicious a thing is wit, when it is not tempered with virtue and humanity.

I have indeed heard of heedless, inconsiderate writers, that without any malice have sacrificed the reputation of their friends and acquaintance to a certain levity of temper, and a silly ambition of distinguishing themselves by a spirit of raillery and satire : as if it were not infinitely more honourable to be a good-natured man than a wit. Where there is this little petulant humour in an author, he is often very mischievous without designing to be so. For which

reason. I always lay it down as a rule, that an indiscreet man is more hurtful than an ill-natured one; for as the one will only attack his enemies, and those he wishes ill to, the other injures indifferently both friends and foes. I cannot forbear, on this occasion, transcribing a fable out of Sir Roger L'Estrange, which accidentally lies before me. "A company of waggish boys were watching of frogs at the side of a pond, and still as any of them put up their heads, they'd be pelting them down again with stones. 'Children,' says one of the frogs, 'you never consider that though this be play to you, 'tis death to us.' "

' As this week is in a manner set apart and dedicated to serious thoughts,<sup>1</sup> I shall indulge myself in such speculations as may not be altogether unsuitable to the season; and in the meantime, as the setting in ourselves a charitable frame of mind is a work very proper for the time, I have in this paper endeavoured to expose that particular breach of charity which has been generally overlooked by divines, because they are but few who can be guilty of it.

*The Spectator*, No. 23.

Tuesday, March 27, 1711.

<sup>1</sup> "Easter Day in 1711 fell on the 1st of April."—H. MORLEY.

## XXXVI

*The Valetudinarian*

—*Aegrescitque medendo.*—VIRG.

THE following letter will explain itself, and needs no apology.

“SIR—I am one of that sickly tribe who are commonly known by the name of Valetudinarians ; and do confess to you, that I first contracted this ill habit of body, or rather of mind, by the study of physic. I no sooner began to peruse books of this nature, but I found my pulse was irregular ; and scarce ever read the account of any disease that I did not fancy myself afflicted with. Dr. Sydenham’s learned treatise of fevers threw me into a lingering hectic, which hung upon me all the while I was reading that excellent piece. I then applied myself to the study of several authors, who have written upon phthisical distempers, and by that means fell into a consumption ; till at length, growing very fat, I was in a manner shamed out of that imagination. Not long after this I found in myself all the symptoms of the gout, except pain ; but was cured of it by a treatise upon the gravel, written by a very ingenious author, who (as it is usual for physicians to convert one distemper into another) eased me of the gout by giving me the stone. I at length studied myself into a complication of distempers ; but, acci-

dentally taking into my hand that ingenious discourse written by Sanctorius, I was resolved to direct myself by a scheme of rules which I had collected from his observations. The learned world are very well acquainted with that gentleman's invention; who, for the better carrying on of his experiments, contrived a certain mathematical chair, which was so artificially hung upon springs, that it would weigh anything as well as a pair of scales. By this means he discovered how many ounces of his food passed by perspiration, what quantity of it was turned into nourishment, and how much went away by the other channels and distributions of nature.

“ Having provided myself with this chair, I used to study, eat, drink, and sleep in it; insomuch that I may be said, for these three last years, to have lived in a pair of scales. I compute myself, when I am in full health, to be precisely two hundredweight, falling short of it about a pound after a day's fast, and exceeding it as much after a very full meal; so that it is my continual employment to trim the balance between these two volatile pounds in my constitution. In my ordinary meals I fetch myself up to two hundredweight and a half pound; and if after having dined I find myself fall short of it, I drink just so much small-beer, or eat such a quantity of bread, as is sufficient to make me weight. In my greatest excesses I do not transgress more than the other half pound; which, for my health's sake, I do the first Monday in every month. As soon as I find myself duly poised after dinner, I walk till I

have perspired five ounces and four scruples; and when I discover, by my chair, that I am so far reduced, I fall to my books, and study away three ounces more. As for the remaining parts of the pound, I keep no account of them. I do not dine and sup by the clock, but by my chair; for when that informs me my pound of food is exhausted, I conclude myself to be hungry, and lay in another with all diligence. In my days of abstinence I lose a pound and an half, and on solemn fasts am two pounds lighter than on other days in the year.

“I allow myself, one night with another, a quarter of a pound of sleep within a few grains more or less; and if upon my rising I find that I have not consumed my whole quantity, I take out the rest in my chair. Upon an exact calculation of what I expended and received the last year, which I always register in a book, I find the medium to be two hundredweight, so that I cannot discover that I am impaired one ounce in my health during a whole twelvemonth. And yet, sir, notwithstanding this my great care to ballast myself equally every day, and to keep my body in its proper poise, so it is that I find myself in a sick and languishing condition. My complexion is grown very sallow, my pulse low, and my body hydropical. Let me therefore beg you, sir, to consider me as your patient, and to give me more certain rules to walk by than those I have already observed, and you will very much oblige

*Your humble servant.”*

This letter puts me in mind of an Italian epitaph

written on the monument of a Valetudinarian, *Stavo ben, ma per star meglio, sto qui*, which it is impossible to translate. The fear of death often proves mortal, and sets people on methods to save their lives which infallibly destroy them. This is a reflection made by some historians, upon observing that there are many more thousands killed in a flight than in a battle, and may be applied to those multitudes of imaginary sick persons that break their constitutions by physic, and throw themselves into the arms of death by endeavouring to escape it. This method is not only dangerous, but below the practice of a reasonable creature. To consult the preservation of life as the only end of it, to make our health our business, to engage in no action that is not part of a regimen or course of physic, are purposes so abject, so mean, so unworthy human nature, that a generous soul would rather die than submit to them. Besides that a continual anxiety for life vitiates all the relishes of it, and casts a gloom over the whole face of nature ; as it is impossible we should take delight in anything that we are every moment afraid of losing.

I do not mean, by what I have here said, that I think any one to blame for taking due care of their health. On the contrary, as cheerfulness of mind and capacity for business are in a great measure the effects of a well-tempered constitution, a man cannot be at too much pains to cultivate and preserve it. But this care, which we are prompted to not only by common sense but by duty and instinct, should never engage



us in groundless fears, melancholy apprehensions, and imaginary distempers, which are natural to every man who is more anxious to live than how to live. In short, the preservation of life should be only a secondary concern, and the direction of it our principal. If we have this frame of mind, we shall take the best means to preserve life, without being over-solicitous about the event; and shall arrive at that point of felicity which Martial has mentioned as the perfection of happiness, of neither fearing nor wishing for death.

In answer to the gentleman, who tempers his health by ounces and by scruples, and instead of complying with those natural solicitations of hunger and thirst, drowsiness or love of exercise, governs himself by the prescriptions of his chair, I shall tell him a short fable. Jupiter, says the mythologist, to reward the piety of a certain countryman, promised to give him whatever he would ask. The countryman desired that he might have the management of the weather in his own estate. He obtained his request, and immediately distributed rain, snow, and sunshine among his several fields, as he thought the nature of the soil required. At the end of the year, when he expected to see a more than ordinary crop, his harvest fell infinitely short of that of his neighbours: upon which (says the fable) he desired Jupiter to take the weather again into his own hands, or that otherwise he should utterly ruin himself.

## XXXVII

*Westminster Abbey*

*Pallida mors aequo pulsat pede pauperum tabernas  
Regumque turres. O beate Sesti,  
Vitae summa brevis spem nos vetat inchoare longam :  
Jam te premet nox, fabulaeque manes,  
Et domus exilis Plutonia—* HOR.

WHEN I am in a serious humour, I very often walk by myself in Westminster Abbey ; where the gloominess of the place, and the use to which it is applied, with the solemnity of the building, and the condition of the people who lie in it, are apt to fill the mind with a kind of melancholy, or rather thoughtfulness, that is not disagreeable. I yesterday passed a whole afternoon in the churchyard, the cloisters, and the church, amusing myself with the tombstones and inscriptions that I met with in those several regions of the dead. Most of them recorded nothing else of the buried person, but that he was born upon one day and died upon another : the whole history of his life being comprehended in those two circumstances, that are common to all mankind. I could not but look upon these registers of existence, whether of brass or marble, as a kind of satire upon the departed persons ; who had left no other memorial of them, but that they were born and that they died. They put me in mind of several persons mentioned in the battles of heroic poems, who have sounding names given them, for no other reason but

that they may be killed, and are celebrated for nothing but being knocked on the head.

Ἰλαῦκόβ τε Μέδοντά τε Θερσίλοχόν τε.—HOM.  
*Glaucumque, Medontaque, Thersilochumque.*—VIRG.

The life of these men is finely described in Holy Writ by “the path of an arrow,” which is immediately closed up and lost.

Upon my going into the church, I entertained myself with the digging of a grave ; and saw in every shovelful of it that was thrown up, the fragment of a bone or skull intermixt with a kind of fresh mouldering earth, that some time or other had a place in the composition of an human body. Upon this, I began to consider with myself what innumerable multitudes of people lay confused together under the pavement of that ancient cathedral ; how men and women, friends and enemies, priests and soldiers, monks and prebendaries, were crumbled amongst one another, and blended together in the same common mass ; how beauty, strength, and youth, with old age, weakness, and deformity, lay undistinguished in the same promiscuous heap of matter.

After having thus surveyed this great magazine of mortality, as it were, in the lump, I examined it more particularly by the accounts which I found on several of the monuments which are raised in every quarter of that ancient fabric. Some of them were covered with such extravagant epitaphs, that, if it were possible for the dead person to be acquainted with them, he

would blush at the praises which his friends have bestowed upon him. There are others so excessively modest, that they deliver the character of the person departed in Greek or Hebrew, and by that means are not understood once in a twelvemonth. In the poetical quarter I found there were poets who had no monuments, and monuments which had no poets. I observed, indeed, that the present war had filled the church with many of these uninhabited monuments, which had been erected to the memory of persons whose bodies were perhaps buried in the plains of Blenheim or in the bosom of the ocean.

I could not but be very much delighted with several modern epitaphs, which are written with great elegance of expression and justness of thought, and therefore do honour to the living as well as to the dead. As a foreigner is very apt to conceive an idea of the ignorance or politeness of a nation from the turn of their public monuments and inscriptions, they should be submitted to the perusal of men of learning and genius before they are put in execution. Sir Cloudesley Shovel's monument has very often given me great offence: instead of the brave rough English Admiral, which was the distinguishing character of that plain gallant man, he is represented on his tomb by the figure of a beau, dressed in a long periwig, and reposing himself upon velvet cushions under a canopy of state. The inscription is answerable to the monument; for instead of celebrating the many remarkable actions he had performed in the service of his country, it acquaints

us only with the manner of his death, in which it was impossible for him to reap any honour. The Dutch, whom we are apt to despise for want of genius, show an infinitely greater taste of antiquity and politeness in their buildings and works of this nature, than what we meet with in those of our own country. The monuments of their admirals, which have been erected at the public expense, represent them like themselves ; and are adorned with rostral crowns and naval ornaments, with beautiful festoons of seaweed, shells, and coral.

But to return to our subject. I have left the repository of our English kings for the contemplation of another day, when I shall find my mind disposed for so serious an amusement. I know that entertainments of this nature are apt to raise dark and dismal thoughts in timorous minds and gloomy imaginations ; but for my own part, though I am always serious, I do not know what it is to be melancholy ; and can therefore take a view of nature in her deep and solemn scenes, with the same pleasure as in her most gay and delightful ones. By this means I can improve myself with those objects which others consider with terror. When I look upon the tombs of the great, every emotion of envy dies in me ; when I read the epitaphs of the beautiful, every inordinate desire goes out ; when I meet with the grief of parents upon a tombstone, my heart melts with compassion ; when I see the tomb of the parents themselves, I consider the vanity of grieving for those whom we must quickly follow ; when I see

kings lying by those who deposed them, when I consider rival wits placed side by side, or the holy men that divided the world with their contests and disputes, I reflect with sorrow and astonishment on the little competitions, factions, and debates of mankind. When I read the several dates of the tombs, of some that died yesterday, and some six hundred years ago, I consider that great day when we shall all of us be contemporaries, and make our appearance together.

*The Spectator*, No. 26.

Friday, March 30, 1711.

### XXXVIII

#### *The Projector*

*Sit mihi fas audita loqui!*—VIRG.

LAST night, upon my going into a coffee-house not far from the Haymarket Theatre, I diverted myself for above half an hour with overhearing the discourse of one, who, by the shabbiness of his dress, the extravagance of his conceptions, and the hurry of his speech, I discovered to be of that species who are generally distinguished by the title of projectors. This gentleman, for I found he was treated as such by his audience, was entertaining a whole table of listeners with the project of an opera, which he told us had not cost him above two or three mornings in the contrivance, and which he was ready to put in execution, provided he might find his account in it. He said, that he had

observed the great trouble and inconvenience which ladies were at, in travelling up and down to the several shows that are exhibited in different quarters of the town. The dancing monkeys are in one place; the puppet-show in another; the opera in a third; not to mention the lions, that are almost a whole day's journey from the politer part of the town. By this means people of figure are forced to lose half the winter after their coming to town, before they have seen all the strange sights about it. In order to remedy this great inconvenience, our projector drew out of his pocket the scheme of an opera entitled *The Expedition of Alexander the Great*; in which he had disposed all the remarkable shows about town, among the scenes and decorations of his piece. The thought, he confessed, was not originally his own, but that he had taken the hint of it from several performances which he had seen upon our stage: in one of which there was a raree-show; in another a ladder-dance; and in others a posture-man, a moving picture, with many curiosities of the like nature.

This *Expedition of Alexander* opens with his consulting the Oracle at Delphos, in which the dumb conjurer, who has been visited by so many persons of quality of late years, is to be introduced as telling him his fortune: at the same time Clench of Barnet is represented in another corner of the temple, as ringing the bells of Delphos for joy of his arrival. The tent of Darius is to be peopled by the ingenious Mrs. Salmon, where Alexander is to fall in love with a piece of wax-

work, that represents the beautiful Statira. When Alexander comes into that country, in which Quintus Curtius tells us the dogs were so exceeding fierce that they would not loose their hold, though they were cut to pieces limb by limb, and that they would hang upon their prey by their teeth when they had nothing but a mouth left, there is to be a scene of Hockley in the Hole, in which is to be represented all the diversions of that place, the bull-baiting only excepted, which cannot possibly be exhibited in the theatre, by reason of the lowness of the roof. The several woods in Asia, which Alexander must be supposed to pass through, will give the audience a sight of monkeys dancing upon ropes, with the many other pleasantries of that ludicrous species. At the same time, if there chance to be any strange animals in town, whether birds or beasts, they may be either let loose among the woods, or driven across the stage by some of the country people of Asia. In the last great battle Pinkethman is to personate King Porus upon an elephant, and is to be encountered by Powell, representing Alexander the Great, upon a dromedary, which nevertheless Mr. Powell is desired to call by the name of Bucephalus. Upon the close of this great decisive battle, when the two kings are thoroughly reconciled, to show the mutual friendship and good correspondence that reigns between them, they both of them go together to a puppet-show, in which the ingenious Mr. Powell, junior, may have an opportunity of displaying his whole art of machinery, for the diversion of the two monarchs. Some at the



table urged that a puppet-show was not a suitable entertainment for Alexander the Great; and that it might be introduced more properly, if we suppose the conqueror touched upon that part of India which is said to be inhabited by the pygmies. But this objection was looked upon as frivolous, and the proposal immediately overruled. Our projector further added, that after the reconciliation of these two kings they might invite one another to dinner, and either of them entertain his guest with the German artist, Mr. Pinkethman's heathen gods, or any of the like diversions, which shall then chance to be in vogue.

This project was received with very great applause by the whole table. Upon which the undertaker told us, that he had not yet communicated to us above half his design; for that Alexander being a Greek, it was his intention that the whole opera should be acted in that language, which was a tongue he was sure would wonderfully please the ladies, especially when it was a little raised and rounded by the Ionic dialect; and could not but be acceptable to the whole audience, because there are fewer of them who understand Greek than Italian. The only difficulty that remained, was how to get performers, unless we could persuade some gentlemen of the universities to learn to sing, in order to qualify themselves for the stage; but this objection soon vanished, when the projector informed us that the Greeks were at present the only musicians in the Turkish empire, and that it would be very easy for our factory at Smyrna to furnish us every year with a

colony of musicians by the opportunity of the Turkey fleet. “Besides,” says he, “if we want any single voice for any lower part in the opera, Lawrence can learn to speak Greek as well as he does Italian, in a fortnight’s time.”

The projector having thus settled matters to the good liking of all that heard him, he left his seat at the table, and planted himself before the fire, where I had unluckily taken my stand for the convenience of overhearing what he said. Whether he had observed me to be more attentive than ordinary I cannot tell, but he had not stood by me above a quarter of a minute, but he turned short upon me on a sudden, and catching me by a button of my coat, attacked me very abruptly after the following manner. “Besides, sir, I have heard of a very extraordinary genius for music that lives in Switzerland, who has so strong a spring in his fingers, that he can make the board of an organ sound like a drum; and if I could but procure a subscription of about ten thousand pounds every winter, I would undertake to fetch him over, and oblige him by articles to set everything that should be sung upon the English stage.” After this he looked full in my face, expecting I would make an answer; when, by good luck, a gentleman that had entered the coffee-house since the projector applied himself to me, hearing him talk of his Swiss compositions, cried out with a kind of laugh, “Is our music then to receive further improvements from Switzerland?” This alarmed the projector, who immediately let go my button, and turned about to

answer him. I took the opportunity of the diversion which seemed to be made in favour of me, and laying down my penny upon the bar, retired with some precipitation.

*The Spectator*, No. 31.

Thursday, April 5, 1711.

### XXXIX

#### *The True Subjects of Ridicule*

—*parcit*  
*Cognatis maculis similis fera*—JUV.

THE club of which I am a member is very luckily composed of such persons as are engaged in different ways of life, and deputed, as it were, out of the most conspicuous classes of mankind: by this means I am furnished with the greatest variety of hints and materials, and know everything that passes in the different quarters and divisions, not only of this great city, but of the whole kingdom. My readers, too, have the satisfaction to find, that there is no rank or degree among them who have not their representative in this club, and that there is always somebody present who will take care of their respective interests, that nothing may be written or published to the prejudice or infringement of their just rights and privileges.

I last night sat very late in company with this select body of friends, who entertained me with several remarks which they and others had made upon these

my speculations, as also with the various success which they had met with among their several ranks and degrees of readers. Will Honeycomb told me, in the softest manner he could, that there were some ladies (but for your comfort, says Will, they are not those of the most wit) that were offended at the liberties I had taken with the opera and the puppet-show ; that some of them were likewise very much surprised, that I should think such serious points as the dress and equipage of persons of quality, proper subjects for raillery.

He was going on, when Sir Andrew Freeport took him up short, and told him, that the papers he hinted at had done great good in the city, and that all their wives and daughters were the better for them ; and further added, that the whole city thought themselves very much obliged to me for declaring my generous intentions to scourge vice and folly as they appear in a multitude, without condescending to be a publisher of particular intrigues and cuckoldoms. " In short," says Sir Andrew, " if you avoid that foolish beaten road of falling upon aldermen and citizens, and employ your pen upon the vanity and luxury of courts, your paper must needs be of general use."

Upon this my friend the Templar told Sir Andrew, that he wondered to hear a man of his sense talk after that manner ; that the city had always been the province for satire ; and that the wits of King Charles's time jested upon nothing else during his whole reign. He then showed, by the examples of Horace, Juvenal,

Boileau, and the best writers of every age, that the follies of the stage and court had never been accounted too sacred for ridicule, how great soever the persons might be that patronized them. "But after all," says he, "I think your raillery has made too great an excursion in attacking several persons of the inns of court; and I do not believe you can show me any precedent for your behaviour in that particular."

My good friend Sir Roger de Coverley, who had said nothing all this while, began his speech with a pish! and told us, that he wondered to see so many men of sense so very serious upon fooleries. "Let our good friend," says he, "attack every one that deserves it: I would only advise you, Mr. Spectator," applying himself to me, "to take care how you meddle with country squires: they are the ornaments of the English nation; men of good heads and sound bodies! and, let me tell you, some of them take it ill of you that you mention fox-hunters with so little respect."

Captain Sentry spoke very sparingly on this occasion. What he said was only to commend my prudence in not touching upon the army, and advised me to continue to act discreetly in that point.

By this time I found every subject of my speculations was taken away from me by one or other of the club; and began to think myself in the condition of the good man that had one wife who took a dislike to his grey hairs, and another to his black, till by their picking out what each of them had an aversion to, they left his head altogether bald and naked.

While I was thus musing with myself, my worthy friend the clergyman, who, very luckily for me, was at the club that night, undertook my cause. He told us, that he wondered any order of persons should think themselves too considerable to be advised: that it was not quality, but innocence, which exempted men from reproof: that vice and folly ought to be attacked wherever they could be met with, and especially when they were placed in high and conspicuous stations of life. He further added, that my paper would only serve to aggravate the pains of poverty, if it chiefly exposed those who are already depressed, and in some measure turned into ridicule, by the meanness of their conditions and circumstances. He afterwards proceeded to take notice of the great use this paper might be of to the public, by reprehending those vices which are too trivial for the chastisement of the law, and too fantastical for the cognizance of the pulpit. He then advised me to prosecute my undertaking with cheerfulness, and assured me, that whoever might be displeased with me, I should be approved by all those whose praises do honour to the persons on whom they are bestowed.

The whole club pays a particular deference to the discourse of this gentleman, and are drawn into what he says as much by the candid and ingenuous manner with which he delivers himself, as by the strength of argument and force of reason which he makes use of. Will Honeycomb immediately agreed, that what he had said was right, and that for his part he would not insist

upon the quarter which he had demanded for the ladies. Sir Andrew gave up the city with the same frankness. The Templar would not stand out, and was followed by Sir Roger, and the Captain: who all agreed that I should be at liberty to carry the war into what quarter I pleased, provided I continued to combat with criminals in a body, and to assault the vice without hurting the person.

This debate, which was held for the good of mankind, put me in mind of that which the Roman triumvirate were formerly engaged in for their destruction. Every man at first stood hard for his friend, till they found that by this means they should spoil their proscription; and at length, making a sacrifice of all their acquaintance and relations, furnished out a very decent execution.

Having thus taken my resolutions to march on boldly in the cause of virtue and good sense, and to annoy their adversaries in whatever degree or rank of men they may be found, I shall be deaf for the future to all the remonstrances that shall be made to me on this account. If Punch grows extravagant, I shall reprimand him very freely: if the stage becomes a nursery of folly and impertinence, I shall not be afraid to animadvert upon it. In short, if I meet with anything in city, court, or country, that shocks modesty or good manners, I shall use my utmost endeavours to make an example of it. I must, however, entreat every particular person who does me the honour to be a reader of this paper, never to think himself, or any

one of his friends or enemies, aimed at in what is said : for I promise him, never to draw a faulty character which does not fit at least a thousand people, or to publish a single paper, that is not written in the spirit of benevolence and with a love to mankind.

*The Spectator*, No. 34.

Monday, April 9, 1711.

## XL

### *A Lady's Library*

—*Non illa colo calathisve Minervae  
Focineas assucta manus.* VERG.

SOME months ago, my friend Sir Roger, being in the country, enclosed a letter to me, directed to a certain lady whom I shall here call by the name of Leonora, and as it contained matters of consequence, desired me to deliver it to her with my own hand. Accordingly I waited upon her ladyship pretty early in the morning, and was desired by her woman to walk into her lady's library, till such time as she was in a readiness to receive me. The very sound of a lady's library gave me a great curiosity to see it; and as it was some time before the lady came to me, I had an opportunity of turning over a great many of her books, which were ranged together in a very beautiful order. At the end of the folios (which were finely bound and gilt) were great jars of china placed one above another in a very noble piece of architecture. The quartos were



separated from the octavos by a pile of smaller vessels, which rose in a delightful pyramid. The octavos were bounded by tea-dishes of all shapes, colours, and sizes, which were so disposed on a wooden frame, that they looked like one continued pillar indented with the finest strokes of sculpture, and stained with the greatest variety of dyes. That part of the library which was designed for the reception of plays and pamphlets, and other loose papers, was enclosed in a kind of square, consisting of one of the prettiest grotesque works that ever I saw, and made up of scaramouches, lions, monkeys, mandarines, trees, shells, and a thousand other odd figures in china ware. In the midst of the room was a little Japan table, with a quire of gilt paper upon it, and on the paper a silver snuff-box made in the shape of a little book. I found there were several other counterfeit books upon the upper shelves, which were carved in wood, and served only to fill up the number, like fagots in the muster of a regiment. I was wonderfully pleased with such a mixt kind of furniture, as seemed very suitable both to the lady and the scholar, and did not know at first whether I should fancy myself in a grotto or in a library.

Upon my looking into the books, I found there were some few which the lady had bought for her own use, but that most of them had been got together, either because she had heard them praised, or because she had seen the authors of them. Among several that I examined, I very well remember these that follow.

*Ogleby's Virgil.*

*Dryden's Juvenal.*

*Cassandra.*

*Cleopatra.*

*Astraea.*

*Sir Isaac Newton's Works.*

*The Grand Cyrus* ; with a pin stuck in one of the middle leaves.

*Pembroke's Arcadia.*

*Locke of Human Understanding* ; with a paper of patches in it.

A Spelling-Book.

A Dictionary for the explanation of hard words.

*Sherlock upon Death.*

*The fifteen Comforts of Matrimony.*

*Sir William Temple's Essays.*

*Father Malbranche's Search after Truth*, translated into English.

A book of Novels.

*The Academy of Compliments.*

*Culpepper's Midwifery.*

*The Ladies' Calling.*

*Tales in Verse* by Mr. *Dursey* : bound in red leather, gilt on the back, and doubled down in several places.

All the Classic Authors, in wood.

A set of *Elzevirs*, by the same hand.

*Clelia* : which opened of itself in the place that describes two lovers in a bower.

*Baker's Chronicle.*

*Advice to a Daughter.*

*The New Atalantis, with a Key to it.*

*Mr. Steele's Christian Hero.*

A Prayer-book ; with a bottle of Hungary water by the side of it.

*Dr. Sacheverell's Speech.*

*Fielding's Trial.*

*Seneca's Morals.*

*Taylor's Holy Living and Dying.*

*La Ferte's Instructions for Country Dances.*

I was taking a catalogue in my pocket-book of these, and several other authors, when Leonora entered, and, upon my presenting her with the letter from the Knight, told me, with an unspeakable grace, that she hoped Sir Roger was in good health : I answered "Yes," for I hate long speeches, and after a bow or two retired.

Leonora was formerly a celebrated beauty, and is still a very lovely woman. She has been a widow for two or three years, and being unfortunate in her first marriage, has taken a resolution never to venture upon a second. She has no children to take care of, and leaves the management of her estate to my good friend Sir Roger. But as the mind naturally sinks into a kind of lethargy, and falls asleep, that is not agitated by some favourite pleasures and pursuits, Leonora has turned all the passions of her sex into a love of books and retirement. She converses chiefly with men (as she has often said herself), but it is only in their writings ; and admits of very few male-visitants, except my friend Sir Roger, whom she keeps with

great pleasure, and without scandal. As her reading has lain very much among romances, it has given her a very particular turn of thinking, and discovers itself even in her house, her gardens, and her furniture. Sir Roger has entertained me an hour together with a description of her country-seat, which is situated in a kind of wilderness, about an hundred miles distant from London, and looks like a little enchanted palace. The rocks about her are shaped into artificial grottoes, covered with woodbines and jessamines. The woods are cut into shady walks, twisted into bowers, and filled with cages of turtles. The springs are made to run among pebbles, and by that means taught to murmur very agreeably. They are likewise collected into a beautiful lake, that is inhabited by a couple of swans, and empties itself by a little rivulet which runs through a green meadow, and is known in the family by the name of "The Purling Stream." The Knight likewise tells me that this lady preserves her game better than any of the gentlemen in the country: "Not," says Sir Roger, "that she sets so great a value upon her partridges and pheasants as upon her larks and nightingales. For she says that every bird which is killed in her ground, will spoil a concert, and that she shall certainly miss him the next year."

When I think how oddly this lady is improved by learning, I look upon her with a mixture of admiration and pity. Amidst these innocent entertainments which she has formed to herself, how much more valuable does she appear than those of her sex, who employ

themselves in diversions that are less reasonable, though more in fashion? What improvements would a woman have made, who is so susceptible of impressions from what she reads, had she been guided to such books as have a tendency to enlighten the understanding and rectify the passions, as well as to those which are of little more use than to divert the imagination?

But the manner of a lady's employing herself usefully in reading shall be the subject of another paper, in which I design to recommend such particular books as may be proper for the improvement of the sex. And as this is a subject of a very nice nature, I shall desire my correspondents to give me their thoughts upon it.

*The Spectator*, No. 37.

Thursday, April 12, 1711.

## XLI

### *Stage Artifices*

*Garganum mugire putes nemus aut mare Thuscum,  
Tanto cum strepitu ludì spectantur, et artes,  
Divitiaeque peregrinae; quibus oblitus actor  
Cum stetit in scena, concurrit dextera laevae.  
Dixit adhuc aliquid? Nil sane. Quid placet ergo?  
Lana Tarentino violas imitata veneno.—HOR.*

ARISTOTLE has observed, that ordinary writers in tragedy endeavour to raise terror and pity in their audience, not by proper sentiments and expressions, but by the dresses and decorations of the stage. There is something of this kind very ridiculous in the English

theatre. When the author has a mind to terrify us, it thunders; when he would make us melancholy, the stage is darkened. But among all our tragic artifices, I am the most offended at those which are made use of to inspire us with magnificent ideas of the persons that speak. The ordinary method of making an hero, is to clap a huge plume of feathers upon his head, which rises so very high, that there is often a greater length from his chin to the top of his head, than to the sole of his foot. One would believe, that we thought a great man and a tall man the same thing. This very much embarrasses the actor, who is forced to hold his neck extremely stiff and steady all the while he speaks; and notwithstanding any anxieties which he pretends for his mistress, his country, or his friends, one may see by his action, that his greatest care and concern is to keep the plume of feathers from falling off his head. For my own part, when I see a man uttering his complaints under such a mountain of feathers, I am apt to look upon him rather as an unfortunate lunatic, than a distressed hero. As these superfluous ornaments upon the head make a great man, a princess generally receives her grandeur from those additional encumbrances that fall into her tail: I mean the broad sweeping train that follows her in all her motions, and finds constant employment for a boy who stands behind her to open and spread it to advantage. I do not know how others are affected at this sight, but I must confess, my eyes are wholly taken up with the page's part; and as for the queen, I

am not so attentive to anything she speaks, as to the right adjusting of her train, lest it should chafe to trip up her heels, or incommode her, as she walks to and fro upon the stage. 'It is, in my opinion, a very odd spectacle, to see a queen venting her passion in a disordered motion, and a little boy taking care all the while that they do not ruffle the tail of her gown. The parts that the two persons act on the stage at the same time, are very different: the princess is afraid lest she should incur the displeasure of the king her father, or lose the herb her lover, whilst her attendant is only concerned lest she should entangle her feet in her petticoat.

We are told that an ancient tragic poet, to move the pity of his audience for his exiled kings and distressed heroes, used to make the actors represent them in dresses and clothes that were threadbare and decayed. This artifice for moving pity seems as ill-contrived as that we have been speaking of, to inspire us with a great idea of the persons introduced upon the stage. In short, I would have our conceptions raised by the dignity of thought and sublimity of expression, rather than by a train of robes or a plume of feathers.

Another mechanical method of making great men, and adding dignity to kings and queens, is to accompany them with halberts and battle-axes. Two or three shifters of scenes, with the two candle-snuffers, make up a complete body of guards upon the English stage; and, by the addition of a few porters dressed in red coats, can represent above a dozen legions. I have

sometimes seen a couple of armies drawn up together upon the stage, when the poet has been disposed to do honour to his generals. It is impossible for the reader's imagination to multiply twenty men into such prodigious multitudes, or to fancy that two or three hundred thousand soldiers are fighting in a room of forty or fifty yards in compass. Incidents of such nature should be told, not represented.

*Non tamen intus  
Digna geri promes in scenam : multaque tolles  
Ex oculis, quae mox narret facundia praesens.*—HOR.

Yet there are things improper for a scene,  
Which men of judgment only will relate.

L.D. ROSCOMMON.

I should therefore, in this particular, recommend to my countrymen the example of the French stage, where the kings and queens always appear unattended, and leave their guards behind the scenes. I should likewise be glad if we imitated the French in banishing from our stage the noise of drums, trumpets, and huzzas; which is sometimes so very great, that when there is a battle in the Haymarket theatre, one may hear it as far as Charing Cross.

I have here only touched upon those particulars which are made use of to raise and aggrandize the persons of a tragedy; and shall show in another paper the several expedients which are practised by authors of a vulgar genius to move terror, pity, or admiration, in their hearers.

The tailor and the painter often contribute to the

VOL. I

O



success of a tragedy more than the poet. Scenes affect ordinary minds as much as speeches ; and our actors are very sensible, that a well-dressed play has sometimes brought them as full audiences as a well-written one. The Italians have a very good phrase, to express this art of imposing upon the spectators by appearances : they call it the *Fourberia della scena*, "The knavery or trickish part of the drama." But however the show and outside of the tragedy may work upon the vulgar, the more understanding part of the audience immediately see through it and despise it.

A good poet will give the reader a more lively idea of an army or a battle in a description, than if he actually saw them drawn up in squadrons and battalions, or engaged in the confusion of a fight. Our minds should be opened to great conceptions and inflamed with glorious sentiments by what the actor speaks, more than by what he appears. Can all the trappings or equipage of a king or hero give Brutus half that pomp and majesty which he receives from a few lines in Shakespeare ?

*The Spectator*, No. 42.

Wednesday, April 18, 1711.

## XLII

### *Stage Artifices (concluded)*

*Tu, quid ego et populus mecum desideret, audi.*—HOR.

AMONG the several artifices which are put in practice by the poets to fill the minds of an audience with terror,

the first place is due to thunder and lightning, which are often made use of at the descending of a god or the rising of a ghost, at the vanishing of a devil, or at the death of a tyrant. I have known a bell introduced into several tragedies with good effect; and have seen the whole assembly in a very great alarm all the while it has been ringing. But there is nothing which delights and terrifies our English theatre so much as a ghost, especially when he appears in a bloody shirt. A spectre has very often saved a play, though he has done nothing but stalked across the stage, or rose through a cleft of it, and sunk again without speaking one word. There may be a proper season for these several terrors; and when they only come in as aids and assistances to the poet, they are not only to be excused, but to be applauded. Thus the sounding of the clock in *Venice Preserved* makes the hearts of the whole audience quake,<sup>1</sup> and conveys a stronger terror to the mind than it is possible for words to do. The appearance of the ghost in *Hamlet* is a masterpiece in its kind, and wrought up with all the circumstances that can create either attention or horror. The mind of the reader is wonderfully prepared for his reception by the discourses that precede it: his dumb behaviour at his first entrance strikes the imagination very strongly; but every time he enters, he is still more terrifying.

<sup>1</sup> In the parting scene between Jaffeir and Belvidera (*Venice Preserved*, Act V., Scene 1.), the passing-bell tolls for the execution of Jaffeir's friend Pierre, who is about to be broken on the wheel. This moving tragedy, the work of the ill-starred Thomas Otway (1654-1685), was produced in 1682.

Who can read the speech with which young Hamlet accosts him, without trembling ?

*Hor.* Look, my Lord, it comes !

*Ham.* Angels and ministers of grace, defend us !  
Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd ;  
Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from hell ;  
Be thy intents wicked or charitable ;  
Thou com'st in such a questionable shape,  
That I will speak to thee. I'll call thee Hamlet,  
King, father, royal Dane. Oh ! answer me,  
Let me not burst in ignorance ; but tell  
Why thy canonized bones, hearsed in death,  
Have burst their cerements ? why the sepulchre,  
Wherein we saw thee quietly inurned,  
Hath oped his ponderous and marble jaws  
To cast thee up again ? what may this mean ?  
That thou, dead corse again in complete steel  
Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,  
Making night hideous ?

I do not therefore find fault with the artifices above-mentioned, when they are introduced with skill, and accompanied by proportionable sentiments and expressions in the writing.

For the moving of pity our principal machine is the handkerchief ; and indeed, in our common tragedies, we should not know very often that the persons are in distress by anything they say, if they did not from time to time apply their handkerchiefs to their eyes. Far be it from me to think of banishing this instrument of sorrow from the stage ; I know a tragedy could not subsist without it : all that I would contend for is, to keep it from being misapplied. In a word, I would have the actor's tongue sympathize with his eyes.

A disconsolate mother, with a child in her hand, has

frequently drawn compassion from the audience, and has therefore gained a place in several tragedies. A modern writer, that observed how this had took in other plays, being resolved to double the distress, and melt his audience twice as much as those before him had done, brought a princess upon the stage with a little boy in one hand and a girl in the other. This too had a very good effect. A third poet, being resolved to out-write all his predecessors, a few years ago introduced three children, with great success; and, as I am informed, a young gentleman, who is fully determined to break the most obdurate hearts, has a tragedy by him, where the first person that appears upon the stage is an afflicted widow in her mourning weeds, with half-a-dozen fatherless children attending her, like those that usually hang about the figure of Charity. Thus several incidents, that are beautiful in a good writer, become ridiculous by falling into the hands of a bad one.

But among all our methods of moving pity or terror, there is none so absurd and barbarous, and what more exposes us to the contempt and ridicule of our neighbours, than that dreadful butchering of one another, which is so very frequent upon the English stage. To delight in seeing men stabbed, poisoned, racked, or impaled, is certainly the sign of a cruel temper; and as this is often practised before the British audience, several French critics, who think these are grateful spectacles to us, take occasion from them to represent us as a people that delight in blood. It is indeed very

odd to see our stage strewed with carcasses in the last scene of a tragedy ; and to observe in the wardrobe of the play-house several daggers, poniards, wheels, bowls for poison, and many other instruments of death. Murders and executions are always transacted behind the scenes in the French theatre ; which in general is very agreeable to the manners of a polite and civilized people : but as there are no exceptions to this rule on the French stage, it leads them into absurdities almost as ridiculous as that which falls under our present censure. I remember in the famous play of *Corneille*, written upon the subject of the *Horatii* and *Curiatii*, the fierce young hero who had overcome the *Curiatii* one after another (instead of being congratulated by his sister for his victory, being upbraided by her for having slain her lover), in the height of his passion and resentment kills her. If anything could extenuate so brutal an action, it would be the doing of it on a sudden, before the sentiments of nature, reason, or manhood could take place in him. However, to avoid public bloodshed, as soon as his passion is wrought to its height, he follows his sister the whole length of the stage, and forbears killing her till they are both withdrawn behind the scenes. I must confess, had he murdered her before the audience, the indecency might have been greater ; but as it is, it appears very unnatural, and looks like killing in cold blood. To give my opinion upon this case, the fact ought not to have been represented, but to have been told, if there was any occasion for it.

It may not be unacceptable to the reader to see how Sophocles has conducted a tragedy under the like delicate circumstances. Orestes was in the same condition with Hamlet in Shakespeare, his mother having murdered his father, and taken possession of his kingdom in conspiracy with her adulterer. That young prince therefore, being determined to revenge his father's death upon those who filled his throne, conveys himself by a beautiful stratagem into his mother's apartment, with a resolution to kill her. But because such a spectacle would have been too shocking to the audience, this dreadful resolution is executed behind the scenes : the mother is heard calling out to her son for mercy, and the son answering her that she showed no mercy to his father ; after which she shrieks out that she is wounded, and by what follows we find that she is slain. I do not remember that in any of our plays there are speeches made behind the scenes, though there are other instances of this nature to be met with in those of the ancients ; and I believe my reader will agree with me, that there is something infinitely more affecting in this dreadful dialogue between the mother and her son behind the scenes, than could have been in anything transacted before the audience. Orestes immediately after meets the usurper at the entrance of his palace ; and by a very happy thought of the poet avoids killing him before the audience, by telling him that he should live some time in his present bitterness of soul before he would dispatch him, and by ordering him to retire into that part of the palace where he

had slain his father, whose murder he would revenge in the very same place where it was committed. By this means the poet observes that decency, which Horace afterwards established by a rule, of forbearing to commit parricides or unnatural murders before the audience.

*Nec coram populo natos Medea trucidet.*

Let not Medea draw her murdering knife,  
And spill her children's blood upon the stage.

The French have therefore refined too much upon Horace's rule, who never designed to banish all kinds of death from the stage, but only such as had too much horror in them, and which would have a better effect upon the audience when transacted behind the scenes. I would therefore recommend to my countrymen the practice of the ancient poets, who were very sparing of their public executions, and rather chose to perform them behind the scenes, if it could be done with as great an effect upon the audience. At the same time I must observe, that though the devoted persons of the tragedy were seldom slain before the audience, which has generally something ridiculous in it, their bodies were often produced after their death, which has always in it something melancholy or terrifying; so that the killing on the stage does not seem to have been avoided only as an indecency, but also as an improbability.

*Nec pueros coram populo Medea trucidet ;  
Aut humana palam coquat exta nefarius Atreus ,  
Aut in avem Progne vertatur, Cadmus in anguem.  
Quodcunque ostendis mihi sic, incredulus odi.*—HOR.

Medea must not draw her murdering knife,  
 Nor Atreus there his horrid feast prepare.  
 Cadmus and Progne's metamorphosis  
 (She to a swallow turned, he to a snake),  
 And whatsoever contradicts my sense,  
 I hate to see, and never can believe.

LD. ROSCOMMON.

I have now gone through the several dramatic inventions which are made use of by the ignorant poets to supply the place of tragedy, and by the skilful to improve it; some of which I could wish entirely rejected, and the rest to be used with caution. It would be an endless task to consider comedy in the same light, and to mention the innumerable shifts that small wits put in practice to raise a laugh. Bullock in a short coat, and Norris<sup>1</sup> in a long one, seldom fail of this effect. In ordinary comedies, a broad and a narrow brimmed hat are different characters. Sometimes the wit of the scene lies in a shoulder-belt, and sometimes in a pair of whiskers. A lover running about the stage, with his head peeping out of a barrel, was thought a very good jest in King Charles the Second's time, and invented by one of the first wits of that age.<sup>2</sup> But because ridicule is not so delicate as compassion, and because the objects that make us laugh are infinitely more numerous than those that make us weep, there is a much greater latitude for comic than tragic artifices, and by consequence a much greater indulgence to be allowed them.

*The Spectator*, No. 44.

Friday, April 20, 1711.

<sup>1</sup> Bullock and Norris were popular comedians of the day.

<sup>2</sup> Sir George Etherege, in *The Comical Revenge, or Love in a Tub*.



## XLIII

*Female Affectation**Natio Comoeda est—Juv.*

THERE is nothing which I more desire than a safe and honourable peace, though at the same time I am very apprehensive of many ill consequences that may attend it. I do not mean in regard to our politics, but to our manners. What an inundation of ribbons and brocades will break in upon us? what peals of laughter and impertinence shall we be exposed to? For the prevention of these great evils, I could heartily wish that there was an act of parliament for prohibiting the importation of French fopperies.

The female inhabitants of our island have already received very strong impressions from this ludicrous nation, though by the length of the war (as there is no evil which has not some good attending it) they are pretty well worn out and forgotten. I remember the time when some of our well-bred countrywomen kept their *valet de chambre*, because, forsooth, a man was much more handy about them than one of their own sex. I myself have seen one of these male Abigails tripping about the room with a looking-glass in his hand, and combing his lady's hair a whole morning together. Whether or no there was any truth in the story of a lady's being got with child by one of these her handmaids, I cannot tell; but I think at present the whole race of them is extinct in our own country.

About the time that several of our sex were taken into this kind of service, the ladies likewise brought up the fashion of receiving visits in their beds. It was then looked upon as a piece of ill-breeding for a woman to refuse to see a man, because she was not stirring; and a porter would have been thought unfit for his place, that could have made so awkward an excuse. As I love to see everything that is new, I once prevailed upon my friend Will Honeycomb to carry me along with him to one of these travelled ladies, desiring him, at the same time, to present me as a foreigner who could not speak English, that so I might not be obliged to bear a part in the discourse. The lady, though willing to appear undrest, had put on her best looks, and painted herself for our reception. Her hair appeared in a very nice disorder, as the night-gown which was thrown upon her shoulders was ruffled with great care. For my part, I am so shocked with everything which looks immodest, in the fair sex, that I could not forbear taking off my eye from her when she moved in her bed, and was in the greatest confusion imaginable every time she stirred a leg or an arm. As the coquets, who introduced this custom, grew old, they left it off by degrees, well knowing that a woman of threescore may kick and tumble her heart out, without making any impressions.

Sempronia is at present the most professed admirer of the French nation, but is so modest as to admit her visitants no further than her toilet. It is a very odd sight that beautiful creature makes, when she is talking politics with her tresses flowing about her

shoulders, and examining that face in the glass, which does such execution upon all the male standers-by. How prettily does she divide her discourse between her woman and her visitants ! What sprightly transitions does she make from an opera or a sermon to an ivory comb or a pincushion ! How have I been pleased to see her interrupted in an account of her travels by a message to her footman ; and holding her tongue, in the midst of a moral reflection, by applying the tip of it to a patch !

There is nothing which exposes a woman to greater dangers, than that gaiety and airiness of temper which are natural to most of the sex. It should be therefore the concern of every wise and virtuous woman, to keep this sprightliness from degenerating into levity. On the contrary, the whole discourse and behaviour of the French is to make the sex more fantastical, or (as they are pleased to term it) *more awakened*, than is consistent either with virtue or discretion. To speak loud in public assemblies, to let every one hear you talk of things that should only be mentioned in private or in whisper, are looked upon as parts of a refined education. At the same time, a blush is unfashionable, and silence more ill-bred than anything that can be spoken. In short, discretion and modesty, which in all other ages and countries have been regarded as the greatest ornaments of the fair sex, are considered as the ingredients of narrow conversation and family behaviour.

Some years ago I was at the tragedy of *Macbeth*,

and unfortunately placed myself under a woman of quality that is since dead, who, as I found by the noise she made, was newly returned from France. A little before the rising of the curtain, she broke out into a loud soliloquy, "When will the dear witches enter?" and immediately upon their first appearance, asked a lady that sat three boxes from her, on her right hand, if those witches were not charming creatures. A little after, as Betterton was in one of the finest speeches of the play, she shook her fan at another lady who sat as far on the left hand, and told her with a whisper, that might be heard all over the pit, "We must not expect to see Balloon to-night." Not long after, calling out to a young baronet by his name, who sat three seats before me, she asked him whether Macbeth's wife was still alive; and before he could give an answer, fell a talking of the ghost of Banquo. She had by this time formed a little audience to herself, and fixed the attention of all about her. But as I had a mind to hear the play, I got out of the sphere of her impertinence, and planted myself in one of the remotest corners of the pit.\*

This pretty childishness of behaviour is one of the most refined parts of coquetry, and is not to be attained in perfection by ladies that do not travel for their improvement. A natural and unconstrained behaviour has something in it so agreeable, that it is no wonder to see people endeavouring after it. But at the same time it is so very hard to hit, when it is not born with us, that people often make themselves ridiculous in attempting it.

A very ingenious French author tells us, that the ladies of the court of France in his time thought it ill-breeding, and a kind of female pedantry, to pronounce an hard word right; for which reason they took frequent occasion to use hard words, that they might show a politeness in murdering them. He further adds, that a lady of some quality at court, having accidentally made use of an hard word in a proper place, and pronounced it right, the whole assembly was out of countenance for her.

I must, however, be so just to own, that there are many ladies who have travelled several thousands of miles without being the worse for it, and have brought home with them all the modesty, discretion, and good sense that they went abroad with. As, on the contrary, there are great numbers of travelled ladies, who have lived all their days within the smoke of London. I have known a woman that never was out of the parish of St. James's betray as many foreign fopperies in her carriage, as she could have gleaned up in half the countries of Europe.

*The Spectator*, No. 45.

Saturday, April 21, 1711.

## XLIV

### *The Lost Minutes*

*Non bene junctarum discordia semina rerum.*—OVID.

WHEN I want materials for this paper, it is my custom to go abroad in quest of game; and when I meet any

proper subject, I take the first opportunity of setting down an hint of it upon paper. At the same time I look into the letters of my correspondents, and if I find anything suggested in them that may afford matter of speculation, I likewise enter a minute of it in my collection of materials. By this means I frequently carry about me a whole sheetful of hints, that would look like a rhapsody of nonsense to anybody but myself : there is nothing in them but obscurity and confusion, raving and inconsistency. In short, they are my speculations in the first principles, that (like the world in its chaos) are void of all light, distinction, and order.

About a week since there happened to me a very odd accident, by reason of one of these my papers of minutes which I had accidentally dropped at Lloyd's Coffee-house, where the auctions are usually kept. Before I missed it, there were a cluster of people who had found it, and were diverting themselves with it at one end of the coffee-house : it had raised so much laughter among them before I had observed what they were about, that I had not the courage to own it. The boy of the coffee-house, when they had done with it, carried it about in his hand, asking everybody if they had dropped a written paper ; but nobody challenging it, he was ordered by those merry gentlemen who had before perused it, to get up into the auction-pulpit and read it to the whole room, that if any one would own it, they might. The boy accordingly mounted the pulpit, and with a very audible voice read as follows :

## MINUTES

Sir Roger de Coverley's country-seat—Yes, for I hate long speeches—Query, if a good Christian may be a conjurer—Childermas-day, Salt-cellar, House-dog, Screech-owl, Cricket—Mr. Thomas Inkle of London, in the good ship called *The Achilles*. Yarico—*Aegrescitque medendo*—Ghosts—The Lady's Library—Lion by trade a tailor—Dromedary called Bucephalus—Equipage the Lady's *summum bonum*—Charles Lillie to be taken notice of—Short face a relief to envy—Redundancies in the three professions—King Latinus a recruit—Jew devouring an ham of bacon—Westminster Abbey—Grand Cairo—Procrastination—April Fools—Blue Boars, Red Lions, Hogs in armour—Enter a King and two fiddlers *solus*—Admission into the Ugly Club—Beauty, how improvable—Families of true and false humour—The parrot's school-mistress—Face half Pict half British—No man to be an hero of a tragedy under six foot—Club of Sighers—Letters from Flowerpots, Elbow-chairs, Tapestry figures, Lion, Thunder—The Bell rings to the puppet-show—Old Woman with a beard married to a smock-faced boy—My next coat to be turned up with blue—Fable of Tongs and Gridiron—Flower Dyers—The Soldier's Prayer—Thank ye for nothing, says the gallipot—Pactolus in stockings, with golden clocks to them—Bamboos, Cudgels, Drumsticks—Slip of my Landlady's eldest daughter—The black mare with a star in her forehead—The barber's pole—Will Honeycomb's coat-pocket—Cæsar's be-

haviour and my own in parallel circumstances—Poem in patch-work—*Nulli gravis est percussus Achilles*—The Female Conventicler—The Ogle-master.

The reading of this paper made the whole coffee-house very merry ; some of them concluded it was written by a madman, and others by somebody that had been taking notes out of the *Spectator*. One who had the appearance of a very substantial citizen, told us, with several politic winks and nods, that he wished there was no more in the paper than what was expressed in it : that, for his part, he looked upon the dromedary, the gridiron, and the barber's pole to signify something more than what is usually meant by those words ; and that he thought the coffee-man could not do better than to carry the paper to one of the Secretaries of State. He further added, that he did not like the name of the outlandish man with the golden clock in his stockings. A young Oxford scholar, who chanced to be with his uncle at the coffee-house, discovered to us who this Pactolus was ; and by that means turned the whole scheme of this worthy citizen into ridicule. While they were making their several conjectures upon this innocent paper, I reached out my arm to the boy, as he was coming out of the pulpit, to give it me ; which he did accordingly. This drew the eyes of the whole company upon me ; but after having cast a cursory glance over it, and shook my head twice or thrice at the reading of it, I twisted it into a kind of match, and lit my pipe with it. My profound silence, together with the steadiness



of my countenance, and the gravity of my behaviour during this whole transaction, raised a very loud laugh on all sides of me ; but as I had escaped all suspicion of being the author, I was very well satisfied; and applying myself to my pipe and the *Post-Man*, took no further notice of anything that passed about me.

My reader will find, that I have already made use of above half the contents of the foregoing paper ; and will easily suppose, that those subjects which are yet untouched were such provisions as I had made for his future entertainment. But as I have been unluckily prevented by this accident, I shall only give him the letters which relate to the two last hints. The first of them I should not have published, were I not informed that there is many an husband who suffers very much in his private affairs by the indiscreet zeal of such a partner as is hereafter mentioned ; to whom I may apply the barbarous inscription quoted by the bishop of Salisbury in his travels : *Dum nimia pia est, facta est impia.*

“SIR—I am one of those unhappy men that are plagued with a gospel-gossip, so common among dissenters (especially Friends). Lectures in the morning, church-meetings at noon, and preparation sermons at night, take up so much of her time, 'tis very rare she knows what we have for dinner, unless when the preacher is to be at it. With him come a tribe, all brothers and sisters it seems ; while others, really such, are deemed no relations. If at any time I have her company alone, she is a mere sermon pop-gun, repeating

and discharging texts, proofs, and applications so perpetually, that however weary I may go to bed, the noise in my head will not let me sleep till towards morning. The misery of my case, and great numbers of such sufferers, plead your pity and speedy relief ; otherwise must expect, in a little time, to be lectured, preached, and prayed into want, unless the happiness of being sooner talked to death prevent it.—I am, etc., R. G.”

The second letter, relating to the Ogling Master, runs thus :

“MR. SPECTATOR—I am an Irish gentleman, that have travelled many years for my improvement ; during which time I have accomplished myself in the whole art of ogling, as it is at present practised in all the polite nations of Europe. Being thus qualified, I intend, by the advice of my friends, to set up for an ogling-master. I teach the church ogle in the morning, and the play-house ogle by candle-light. I have also brought over with me a new flying ogle fit for the ring ; which I teach in the dusk of the evening, or in any hour of the day by darkening one of my windows. I have a manuscript by me called *The Complete Ogler*, which I shall be ready to show you upon any occasion. In the meantime, I beg you will publish the substance of this letter in an advertisement, and you will very much oblige, Yours,” etc.

## XLV

*The Happy Hunting-Grounds**Felices errore suo*—LUCAN.

THE Americans believe that all creatures have souls, not only men and women, but brutes, vegetables, nay, even the most inanimate things, as stocks and stones. They believe the same of all the works of art, as of knives, boats, looking-glasses; and that as any of these things perish, their souls go into another world, which is inhabited by the ghosts of men and women. For this reason they always place by the corpse of their dead friend a bow and arrows, that he may make use of the souls of them in the other world, as he did of their wooden bodies in this. How absurd soever such an opinion as this may appear, our European philosophers have maintained several notions altogether as improbable. Some of Plato's followers in particular, when they talk of the world of ideas, entertain us with substances and beings no less extravagant and chimerical. Many Aristotelians have likewise spoken as unintelligibly of their substantial forms. I shall only instance Albertus Magnus, who in his dissertation upon the loadstone, observing that fire will destroy its magnetic virtues, tells us that he took particular notice of one as it lay glowing amidst an heap of burning coals, and that he perceived a certain blue vapour to arise from it, which he believed might be

the substantial form, that is, in our West Indian phrase, the soul of the loadstone.

There is a tradition among the Americans, that one of their countrymen descended in a vision to the great repository of souls, or, as we call it here, to the other world; and that upon his return he gave his friends a distinct account of everything he saw among those regions of the dead. A friend of mine, whom I have formerly mentioned, prevailed upon one of the interpreters of the Indian kings to inquire of them, if possible, what tradition they have among them of this matter; which, as well as he could learn by those many questions which he asked them at several times, was in substance as follows.

The visionary, whose name was Marraton, after having travelled for a long space under an hollow mountain, arrived at length on the confines of this world of spirits, but could not enter it by reason of a thick forest made up of bushes, brambles, and pointed thorns, so perplexed and interwoven with one another, that it was impossible to find a passage through it. Whilst he was looking about for some track or pathway that might be worn in any part of it, he saw an huge lion couched under the side of it, who kept his eye upon him in the same posture as when he watches for his prey. The Indian immediately started back, whilst the lion rose with a spring, and leaped towards him. Being wholly destitute of all other weapons, he stooped down to take up an huge stone in his hand, but to his infinite surprise grasped nothing, and found

the supposed stone to be only the apparition of a *qif*. If he was disappointed on this side, he was as much pleased on the other, when he found the lion, which had seized on his left shoulder, had no power to hurt him, and was only the ghost of that ravenous creature which it appeared to be. He no sooner got rid of his impotent enemy, but he marched up to the wood, and after having surveyed it for some time, endeavoured to press into one part of it that was a little thinner than the rest; when again, to his great surprise, he found the bushes made no resistance, but that he walked through briars and brambles with the same ease as through the open air, and, in short, that the whole wood was nothing else but a wood of shades. He immediately concluded that this huge thicket of thorns and brakes was designed as a kind of fence or quick-set hedge to the ghosts it enclosed; and that probably their soft substances might be torn by these subtle points and prickles, which were too weak to make any impressions in flesh and blood. With this thought he resolved to travel through this intricate wood; when by degrees he felt a gale of perfumes breathing upon him, that grew stronger and sweeter in proportion as he advanced. He had not proceeded much further when he observed the thorns and briars to end, and give place to a thousand beautiful green trees covered with blossoms of the finest scents and colours, that formed a wilderness of sweets, and were a kind of lining to those ragged scenes which he had before passed through. As he was coming out of this delightful part

of the wood, and entering upon the plains it enclosed, he saw several horsemen rushing by him, and a little while after heard the cry of a pack of dogs. He had not listened long before he saw the apparition of a milk-white steed, with a young man on the back of it, advancing upon full stretch after the souls of about an hundred beagles that were hunting down the ghost of an hare, which ran away before them with an unspeakable swiftness. As the man on the milk-white steed came by him, he looked upon him very attentively, and found him to be the young prince Nicharagua, who died about half a year before, and, by reason of his great virtues, was at that time lamented over all the western parts of America.

He had no sooner got out of the wood, but he was entertained with such a landscape of flowery plains, green meadows, running streams, sunny hills, and shady vales, as were not to be represented by his own expressions, nor, as he said, by the conceptions of others. This happy region was peopled with innumerable swarms of spirits, who applied themselves to exercises and diversions according as their fancies led them. Some of them were tossing the figure of a quoit; others were pitching the shadow of a bar; others were breaking the apparition of a horse; and multitudes employing themselves upon ingenious handicrafts with the souls of departed utensils; for that is the name which in the Indian language they give their tools when they are burnt or broken. As he travelled through this delightful scene, he was very often tempted

to pluck the flowers that rose everywhere about him in the greatest variety and profusion, having never seen several of them in his own country; but he quickly found that though they were objects of his sight, they were not liable to his touch. He at length came to the side of a great river, and being a good fisherman himself, stood upon the banks of it some time to look upon an angler that had taken a great many shapes of fishes, which lay flouncing up and down by him.

I should have told my reader, that this Indian had been formerly married to one of the greatest beauties of his country, by whom he had several children. This couple were so famous for their love and constancy to one another, that the Indians to this day, when they give a married man joy of his wife, wish that they may live together like Marraton and Yaratilda. Marraton had not stood long by the fisherman when he saw the shadow of his beloved Yaratilda, who had for some time fixed her eye upon him, before he discovered her. Her arms were stretched out towards him, floods of tears ran down her eyes; her looks, her hands, her voice called him over to her, and at the same time seemed to tell him that the river was unpassable. Who can describe the passion made up of joy, sorrow, love, desire, astonishment, that rose in the Indian upon the sight of his dear Yaratilda? He could express it by nothing but his tears, which ran like a river down his cheeks as he looked upon her. He had not stood in this posture long, before he plunged into the stream

that lay before him; and finding it to be nothing but the phantom of a river, walked on the bottom of it till he arose on the other side. At his approach Yaratilda flew into his arms, whilst Marraton wished himself disencumbered of that body which kept her from his embraces. After many questions and endearments on both sides, she conducted him to a bower which she had dressed with her own hands with all the ornaments that could be met with in those blooming regions. She had made it gay beyond imagination, and was every day adding something new to it. As Marraton stood astonished at the unspeakable beauty of her habitation, and ravished with the fragrancy that came from every part of it, Yaratilda told him that she was preparing this bower for his reception, as well knowing that his piety to his God, and his faithful dealing towards men, would certainly bring him to that happy place whenever his life should be at an end. She then brought two of her children to him, who died some years before, and resided with her in the same delightful bower; advising him to breed up those others which were still with him in such a manner, that they might hereafter all of them meet together in this happy place.

This tradition tells us further, that he had afterwards a sight of those dismal habitations which are the portion of ill men after death; and mentions several molten seas of gold, in which were plunged the souls of barbarous Europeans, who put to the sword so many thousands of poor Indians for the sake of that precious



metal: but having already touched upon the chief points of this tradition, and exceeded the measure of my paper, I shall not give any further account of it.

*The Spectator*, No. 56.

Friday, May 4, 1711.

## XLVI

### *Female Politicians*

*Quem præstare potest mulier galeata pudorem,  
Quæ fugit a sexu?*— JUV.

WHEN the wife of Hector, in Homer's *Iliads*, discourses with her husband about the battle in which he was going to engage, the hero, desiring her to leave that matter to his care, bids her go to her maids and mind her spinning: by which the poet intimates, that men and women ought to busy themselves in their proper spheres, and on such matters only as are suitable to their respective sex.

I am at this time acquainted with a young gentleman, who has passed a great part of his life in the nursery, and, upon occasion, can make a caudle or a sack-posset better than any man in England. He is likewise a wonderful critic in cambric and muslins, and will talk an hour together upon a sweetmeat. He entertains his mother every night with observations that he makes both in town and court: as what lady shows the nicest fancy in her dress; what man of quality wears the fairest wig; who has the finest linen, who the prettiest

snuff-box, with many other the like curious remarks that may be made in good company.

On the other hand, I have very frequently the opportunity of seeing a rural Andromache, who came up to town last winter, and is one of the greatest fox-hunters in the country. She talks of hounds and horses, and makes nothing of leaping over a six-bar gate. If a man tells her a waggish story, she gives him a push with her hand in jest, and calls him an impudent dog; and if her servant neglects his business, threatens to kick him out of the house. I have heard her, in her wrath, call a substantial tradesman a lousy cur; and remember one day, when she could not think of the name of a person, she described him, in a large company of men and ladies, by the fellow with the broad shoulders.

If those speeches and actions, which in their own nature are indifferent, appear ridiculous when they proceed from a wrong sex, the faults and imperfections of one sex, transplanted into another, appear black and monstrous. As for the men, I shall not in this paper any further concern myself about them; but as I would fain contribute to make womankind, which is the most beautiful part of the creation, entirely amiable, and wear out all those little spots and blemishes that are apt to rise among the charms which nature has poured out upon them, I shall dedicate this paper to their service. The spot which I would here endeavour to clear them of, is that party-rage which of late years is very much crept into their conversation.

This is, in its nature, a male vice, and made up of many angry and cruel passions that are altogether repugnant to the softness, the modesty, and those endearing qualities which are natural to the fair sex. Women were formed to temper mankind, and soothe them into tenderness and compassion, not to set an edge upon their minds, and blow up in them those passions which are too apt to rise of their own accord. When I have seen a pretty mouth uttering calumnies and invectives, what would I not have given to have stopt it? How have I been troubled to see some of the finest features in the world grow pale and tremble with party-rage? Camilla is one of the greatest beauties in the British nation, and yet values herself more upon being the virago of one party, than upon being the toast of both. The dear creature, about a week ago, encountered the fierce and beautiful Penthesilea across a tea-table; but in the height of her anger, as her hand chanced to shake with the earnestness of the dispute, she scalded her fingers, and spilt a dish of tea upon her petticoat. Had not this accident broke off the debate, nobody knows where it would have ended.

There is one consideration which I would earnestly recommend to all my female readers, and which, I hope, will have some weight with them. In short, it is this, that there is nothing so bad for the face as party-zeal. It gives an ill-natured cast to the eye, and a disagreeable sourness to the look; besides that it makes the lines too strong, and flushes them worse than brandy. I have seen a woman's face break out in heats, as she

has been talking against a great lord, whom she had never seen in her life ; and indeed never knew a party-woman, that kept her beauty for a twelvemonth. I would therefore advise all my female readers, as they value their complexions, to let alone all disputes of this nature ; though, at the same time, I would give free liberty to all superannuated motherly partisans to be as violent as they please, since there will be no danger either of their spoiling their faces, or of their gaining converts.

For my own part, I think a man makes an odious and despicable figure that is violent in a party ; but a woman is too sincere to mitigate the fury of her principles with temper and discretion, and to act with that caution and reservedness which are requisite in our sex. When this unnatural zeal gets into them, it throws them into ten thousand heats and extravagances ; their generous souls set no bounds to their love or to their hatred ; and whether a Whig or Tory, a lap-dog or a gallant, an opera or a puppet-show be the object of it, the passion, while it reigns, engrosses the whole woman.

I remember when Dr. Titus Oates was in all his glory, I accompanied my friend Will Honeycomb in a visit to a lady of his acquaintance : we were no sooner sat down, but upon casting my eyes about the room, I found in almost every corner of it a print that represented the doctor in all magnitudes and dimensions. A little after, as the lady was discoursing my friend, and held her snuff-box in her hand, who should

I see in the lid of it but the doctor. It was not long after this, when she had occasion for her handkerchief, which upon the first opening discovered among the plaits of it the figure of the doctor. Upon this my friend Will, who loves raillery, told her that if he was in Mr. Truelove's place (for that was the name of her husband) he should be made as uneasy by a handkerchief as ever Othello was. "I am afraid," said she, "Mr. Honeycomb, you are a Tory: tell me truly, are you a friend to the doctor or not?" Will, instead of making her a reply, smiled in her face (for indeed she was very pretty) and told her that one of her patches was dropping off. She immediately adjusted it, and looking a little seriously, "Well," says she, "I'll be hanged if you and your silent friend there are not against the doctor in your hearts; I suspected as much by his saying nothing." Upon this she took her fan into her hand, and upon the opening of it again displayed to us the figure of the doctor, who was placed with great gravity among the sticks of it. In a word, I found that the doctor had taken possession of her thoughts, her discourse, and most of 'her furniture; but finding myself pressed too close by her question, I winked upon my friend to take his leave, which he did accordingly.

*The Spectator*, No. 57.

Saturday, May 5, 1711.

## XLVII

*False Wit*

*Hoc est quod palles ? cur quis non prandeat, hoc est ?*  
 PER. Sat. 3.

SEVERAL kinds of false wit that vanished in the refined ages of the world, discovered themselves again in the times of monkish ignorance.

As the monks were the masters of all that little learning which was then extant, and had their whole lives entirely disengaged from business, it is no wonder that several of them, who wanted genius for higher performances, employed many hours in the composition of such tricks in writing as required much time and little capacity. I have seen half the *Aeneid* turned into Latin rhymes by one of the *beaux esprits* of that dark age ; who says in his preface to it, that the *Aeneid* wanted nothing but the sweets of rhyme to make it the most perfect work in its kind. I have likewise seen an hymn in hexameters to the Virgin Mary, which filled a whole book, though it consisted but of the eight following words :

*Tot, tibi, sunt, Virgo, dotes, quot, sidera, coelo.*

Thou hast as many virtues, O virgin, as there are stars in heaven."

The poet rung the changes upon these eight several words, and by that means made his verses almost as numerous as the virtues and the stars which they

celebrated. It is no wonder that men who had so much time upon their hands did not only restore all the antiquated pieces of false wit, but enriched the world with inventions of their own. It was to this age that we owe the production of anagrams, which is nothing else but a transmutation of one word into another, or the turning of the same set of letters into different words ; which may change night into day, or black into white, if chance, who is the goddess that presides over these sorts of composition, shall so direct. I remember a witty author, in allusion to this kind of writing, calls his rival, who (it seems) was distorted, and had his limbs set in places that did not properly belong to them, "The Anagram of a Man."

When the anagrammatist takes a name to work upon, he considers it at first as a mine not broken up, which will not show the treasure it contains till he shall have spent many hours in the search of it ; for it is his business to find out one word that conceals itself in another, and to examine the letters in all the variety of stations in which they can possibly be ranged. I have heard of a gentleman who, when this kind of wit was in fashion, endeavoured to gain his mistress's heart by it. She was one of the finest women of her age, and known by the name of the Lady Mary Boon. The lover not being able to make anything of Mary, by certain liberties indulged to this kind of writing, converted it into Moll ; and after having shut himself up for half a year, with indefatigable industry produced an anagram. Upon the presenting it to his

mistress, who was a little vexed in her heart to see herself degraded into Moll Boon, she told him, to his infinite surprise, that he had mistaken her surname, for that it was not Boon but Bohun.

—*Ibi omnis*  
*Effusus labor*—

The lover was thunderstruck with his misfortune, insomuch that in a little time after he lost his senses, which indeed had been very much impaired by that continual application he had given to his anagram.

The acrostic was probably invented about the same time with the anagram, though it is impossible to decide whether the inventor of the one or the other were the greater blockhead. The simple acrostic is nothing but the name or title of a person or thing made out of the initial letters of several verses, and by that means written, after the manner of the Chinese, in a perpendicular line. But besides these there are compound acrostics, where the principal letters stand two or three deep. I have seen some of them where the verses have not only been edged by a name at each extremity, but have had the same name running down like a seam through the middle of the poem.

There is another near relation of the anagrams and acrostics, which is commonly called a chronogram. This kind of wit appears very often on many modern medals, especially those of Germany, when they represent in the inscription the year in which they were coined. Thus we see on a medal of Gustavus Adolphus, the following words, CHRISTVS DUX ERGO



TRIUMPHS. If you take the pains to pick the figures out of the several words, and range them in their proper order, you will find they amount to MDCXVVVII, or 1627, the year in which the medal was stamped ; for as some of the letters distinguish themselves from the rest, and overtop their fellows, they are to be considered in a double capacity, both as letters and as figures. Your laborious German wits will turn over a whole dictionary for one of these ingenious devices. A man would think they were searching after an apt classical term, but instead of that they are looking out a word that has an L, an M, or a D in it. When therefore we meet with any of these inscriptions, we are not so much to look in them for the thought, as for the year of the Lord.

The *Bouts-Rimes* were the favourites of the French nation for a whole age together, and that at a time when it abounded in wit and learning. They were a list of words that rhyme to one another, drawn up by another hand, and given to a poet, who was to make a poem to the rhymes in the same order that they were placed upon the list : the more uncommon the rhymes were, the more extraordinary was the genius of the poet that could accommodate his verses to them. I do not know any greater instance of the decay of wit and learning among the French (which generally follows the declension of empire) than the endeavouring to restore this foolish kind of wit. If the reader will be at the trouble to see examples of it, let him look into the new *Mercure Galant* ; where the author every

month gives a list of rhymes to be filled up by the ingenious, in order to be communicated to the public in the *Mercure* for the succeeding month. That for the month of November last, which now lies before me, is as follows :

.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	<i>Lauriers</i>
.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	<i>Guerriers</i>
.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	<i>Musette</i>
.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	<i>Lisette</i>
.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	<i>Cæsars</i>
.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	<i>Etendars</i>
.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	<i>Houlette</i>
.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	<i>Folette</i>

One would be amazed to see so learned a man as Menage talking seriously on this kind of trifle in the following passage :

“ Monsieur de la Chambre has told me that he never knew what he was going to write when he took his pen into his hand, but that one sentence always produced another. For my own part, I never knew what I should write next when I was making verses. In the first place, I got all my rhymes together, and was afterwards perhaps three or four months in filling them up. I one day showed Monsieur Gombaud a composition of this nature, in which, among others, I had made use of the four following rhymes, Amaryllis, Phillis, Marne, Arne, desiring him to give me his opinion of it. He told me immediately, that my verses were good for nothing. And upon my asking his

reason, he said, because the rhymes are too common, and for that reason easy to be put into verse. Marry, says I, if it be so, I am very well rewarded for all the pains I have been at. But by Monsieur Gombaud's leave, notwithstanding the severity of the criticism, the verses were good." Vid. MENAGIANA. Thus far the learned Menage, whom I have translated word for word.

The first occasion of these *Bouts-Rimez* made them in some manner excusable, as they were tasks which the French ladies used to impose on their lovers. But when a grave author, like him above-mentioned, tasked himself, could there be anything more ridiculous? or would not one be apt to believe that the author played booty, and did not make his list of rhymes till he had finished his poem?

I shall only add that this piece of false wit has been finely ridiculed by Monsieur Sarasin, in a poem intituled, *La Defaite des Bouts-Rimez*, "The Rout of the Bouts-Rimez."

I must subjoin to this last kind of wit the double rhymes, which are used in doggerel poetry, and generally applauded by ignorant readers. If the thought of the couplet in such compositions is good, the rhyme adds little to it; and if bad, it will not be in the power of the rhyme to recommend it. I am afraid that great numbers of those who admire the incomparable *Hudibras*, do it more on account of these doggerel rhymes than of the parts that really deserve admiration. I am sure I have heard the

Pulpit, drum ecclesiastic,  
Was beat with fist instead of a stick,  
and

• There was an ancient sage philosopher  
Who had read Alexander Ross over,

more frequently quoted than the finest pieces of wit  
in the whole poem.

*The Spectator*, No. 60.

Wednesday, May 9, 1711.

## XLVIII

### *True and False Wit*

*Scribendi recte sapere est et principium et fons.*—HOR.

MR. LOCKE has an admirable reflection upon the difference of wit and judgment, whereby he endeavours to show the reason why they are not always the talents of the same person. His words are as follow : “ And hence, perhaps, may be given some reason of that common observation, that men who have a great deal of wit and prompt memories, have not always the clearest judgment or deepest reason. For wit lying most in the assemblage of ideas, and putting those together with quickness and variety, wherein can be found any resemblance or congruity, thereby to make up pleasant pictures and agreeable visions in the fancy ; judgment, on the contrary, lies quite on the other side, in separating carefully one from another, ideas wherein can be found the least difference, thereby to avoid being misled by similitude, and by affinity

to take one thing for another. This is a way of proceeding quite contrary to metaphor and allusion; wherein, for the most part, lies that entertainment and pleasantry of wit which strikes so lively on the fancy, and is therefore so acceptable to all people."

This is, I think, the best and most philosophical account that I have ever met with of wit, which generally, though not always, consists in such a resemblance and congruity of ideas as this author mentions. I shall only add to it, by way of explanation, that every resemblance of ideas is not that which we call wit, unless it be such an one that gives delight and surprise to the reader: these two properties seem essential to wit, more particularly the last of them. In order therefore that the resemblance in the ideas be wit, it is necessary that the ideas should not lie too near one another in the nature of things; for where the likeness is obvious, it gives no surprise. To compare one man's singing to that of another, or to represent the whiteness of any object by that of milk and snow, or the variety of its colours by those of the rainbow, cannot be called wit, unless, besides this obvious resemblance, there be some further congruity discovered in the two ideas, that is capable of giving the reader some surprise. Thus when a poet tells us, the bosom of his mistress is as white as snow, there is no wit in the comparison; but when he adds, with a sigh, that it is as cold too, it then grows into wit. Every reader's memory may supply him with innumerable instances of the same nature. For this reason, the similitudes in

heroic poets, who endeavour rather to fill the mind with great conceptions than to divert it with such as are new and surprising, have seldom anything in them that can be called wit. Mr. Locke's account of wit, with this short explanation, comprehends most of the species of wit, as metaphors, similitudes, allegories, enigmas, mottoes, parables, fables, dreams, visions, dramatic writings, burlesque, and all the methods of allusion : as there are many other pieces of wit (how remote soever they may appear at first sight from the foregoing description) which upon examination will be found to agree with it.

As true wit generally consists in this resemblance and congruity of ideas, false wit chiefly consists in the resemblance and congruity sometimes of single letters, as in anagrams, chronograms, lipograms, and acrostics : sometimes of syllables, as in echoes and doggerel rhymes : sometimes of words, as in puns and quibbles ; and sometimes of whole sentences or poems cast into the figures of eggs, axes, or altars : nay, some carry the notion of wit so far as to ascribe it even to external mimicry, and to look upon a man as an ingenious person that can resemble the tone, posture, or face of another.

As true wit consists in the resemblance of ideas, and false wit in the resemblance of words, according to the foregoing instances, there is another kind of wit which consists partly in the resemblance of ideas and partly in the resemblance of words, which, for distinction sake, I shall call mixed wit. This kind of wit is that which

abounds in Cowley, more than in any author that ever wrote. Mr. Waller has likewise a great deal of it. Mr. Dryden is very sparing in it. Milton had a genius much above it. Spenser is in the same class with Milton. The Italians, even in their epic poetry, are full of it. Monsieur Boileau, who formed himself upon the ancient poets, has everywhere rejected it with scorn. If we look after mixed wit among the Greek writers, we shall find it nowhere but in the epigrammatists. There are indeed some strokes of it in the little poem ascribed to Musaeus, which by that, as well as many other marks, betrays itself to be a modern composition. If we look into the Latin writers, we find none of this mixed wit in Virgil, Lucretius, or Catullus ; very little in Horace, but a great deal of it in Ovid, and scarce anything else in Martial.

Out of the innumerable branches of mixed wit, I shall choose one instance which may be met with in all the writers of this class. The passion of love in its nature has been thought to resemble fire ; for which reason the words fire and flame are made use of to signify love. The witty poets therefore have taken an advantage from the doubtful meaning of the word fire, to make an infinite number of witticisms. Cowley observing the cold regard of his mistress's eyes, and at the same time their power of producing love in him, considers them as burning-glasses made of ice ; and finding himself able to live in the greatest extremities of love, concludes the torrid zone to be habitable. When his mistress has read his letter written in juice of lemon, by holding

it to the fire, he desires her to read it over a second time by love's flames. When she weeps, he wishes it were inward heat that distilled those drops from the limbec. When she is absent, he is beyond eighty, that is, thirty degrees nearer the pole than when she is with him. His ambitious love is a fire that naturally mounts upwards; his happy love is the beams of heaven, and his unhappy love flames of hell. When it does not let him sleep, it is a flame that sends up no smoke; when it is opposed by counsel and advice, it is a fire that rages the more by the wind's blowing upon it. Upon the dying of a tree in which he had cut his loves, he observes that his written flames had burnt up and withered the tree. When he resolves to give over his passion, he tells us that one burnt like him for ever dreads the fire. His heart is an Etna, that instead of Vulcan's shop encloses Cupid's forge in it. His endeavouring to drown his love in wine, is throwing oil upon the fire. He would insinuate to his mistress, that the fire of love, like that of the sun (which produces so many living creatures), should not only warm but beget. Love in another place cooks pleasure at his fire. Sometimes the poet's heart is frozen in every breast, and sometimes scorched in every eye. Sometimes he is drowned in tears and burnt in love, like a ship set on fire in the middle of the sea.

The reader may observe in every one of these instances, that the poet mixes the qualities of fire with those of love; and in the same sentence speaking of it both as a passion and as real fire, surprises the reader



with those seeming resemblances or contradictions that make up all the wit in this kind of writing. Mixed wit therefore is a composition of pun and true wit, and is more or less perfect as the resemblance lies in the ideas or in the words: its foundations are laid partly in falsehood and partly in truth: reason puts in her claim for one half of it, and extravagance for the other. The only province therefore for this kind of wit is epigram, or those little occasional poems that in their own nature are nothing else but a tissue of epigrams. I cannot conclude this head of mixed wit, without owning that the admirable poet out of whom I have taken the examples of it, had as much true wit as any author that ever writ, and, indeed, all other talents of an extraordinary genius.

It may be expected, since I am upon this subject, that I should take notice of Mr. Dryden's definition of wit, which, with all the deference that is due to the judgment of so great a man, is not so properly a definition of wit as of good writing in general. Wit, as he defines it, is "a propriety of words and thoughts adapted to the subject." If this be a true definition of wit, I am apt to think that Euclid was the greatest wit that ever set pen to paper: it is certain that never was a greater propriety of words and thoughts adapted to the subject, than what that author has made use of in his *Elements*. I shall only appeal to my reader, if this definition agrees with any notion he has of wit. If it be a true one, I am sure Mr. Dryden was not only a better poet, but a greater wit, than Mr.

Cowley ; and Virgil a much more facetious man than either Ovid or Martial.

Boplaus, whom I look upon to be the most penetrating of all the French critics, has taken pains to show, that it is impossible for any thought to be beautiful which is not just, and has not its foundation in the nature of things : that the basis of all wit is truth ; and that no thought can be valuable, of which good sense is not the groundwork. Boileau has endeavoured to inculcate the same notion in several parts of his writings, both in prose and verse. This is that natural way of writing, that beautiful simplicity, which we so much admire in the compositions of the ancients ; and which nobody deviates from, but those who want strength of genius to make a thought shine in its own natural beauties. Poets who want this strength of genius to give that majestic simplicity to nature, which we so much admire in the works of the ancients, are forced to hunt after foreign ornaments, and not to let any piece of wit of what kind soever escape them. I look upon these writers as Goths in poetry, who, like those in architecture, not being able to come up to the beautiful simplicity of the old Greeks and Romans, have endeavoured to supply its place with all the extravagances of an irregular fancy. Mr Dryden makes a very handsome observation on Ovid's writing a letter from Dido to Aeneas, in the following words : " Ovid," says he, speaking of Virgil's fiction of Dido and Aeneas, " takes it up after him, even in the same age, and makes an ancient heroine of Virgil's new-

created Dido ; dictates a letter for her just before her death to the ungrateful fugitive ; and, very unluckily for himself, is for measuring a sword with a man so much superior in force to him on the same subject. I think I may be judge of this, because I have translated both. The famous author of the *Art of Love* has nothing of his own ; he borrows all from a greater master in his own profession, and, which is worse, improves nothing which he finds : nature fails him, and being forced to his old shift, he has recourse to witticism. This passes indeed with his soft admirers, and gives him the preference to Virgil in their esteem."

Were not I supported by so great an authority as that of Mr. Dryden, I should not venture to observe, that the taste of most of our English poets, as well as readers, is extremely Gothic. He quotes Monsieur Segrais for a threefold distinction of the readers of poetry ; in the first of which he comprehends the rabble of readers, whom he does not treat as such with regard to their quality, but to their numbers and the coarseness of their taste. His words are as follow : " Segrais has distinguished the readers of poetry, according to their capacity of judging, into three classes. (He might have said the same of writers too, if he had pleased.) In the lowest form he places those whom he calls *Les Petits Esprits*, such things as are our upper gallery audience in a play-house ; who like nothing but the husk and rind of wit, prefer a quibble, a conceit, an epigram, before solid sense and elegant expression : these are mob readers. If Virgil and Martial stood

for parliament-men, we know already who would carry it. But though they make the greatest appearance in the field, and cry the loudest, the best on't is, they are but a sort of French Huguenots or Dutch boors, brought over in herds, but not naturalized ; who have not lands of two pounds per annum in Parnassus, and therefore are not privileged to poll. Their authors are of the same level, fit to represent them on a mountebank's stage, or to be masters of the ceremonies in a bear-garden : yet these are they who have the most admirers. But it often happens, to their mortification, that as their readers improve their stock of sense (as they may by reading better books, and by conversation with men of judgment), they soon forsake them."

I must not dismiss this subject without observing, that as Mr. Locke, in the passage above-mentioned, has discovered the most fruitful source of wit, so there is another of a quite contrary nature to it, which does likewise branch itself out into several kinds. For not only the resemblance but the opposition of ideas does very often produce wit ; as I could show in several little points, turns, and antitheses. that I may possibly enlarge upon in some future speculation.

*The Spectator*, No. 62.

Friday, May 11, 1711.

## XLIX

*The Royal Exchange*

*Hic segetes, illic veniunt felicius uvae :  
Arborei foetus alibi, atque injussa virescunt  
Gramina. Nonne vides, croceos ut Tmolus odores,  
India mittit ebur, molles sua thura Sabaevi ?  
At Chalybes nudi ferrum, virosaque Pontus  
Castorea, Eliadum palmas Epirus equarum ?  
Continuo has leges aeternaque foedera certis  
Imposuit natura locis—*

VIRG.

THERE is no place in the town which I so much love to frequent as the Royal Exchange. It gives me a secret satisfaction, and, in some measure, gratifies my vanity, as I am an Englishman, to see so rich an assembly of countrymen and foreigners consulting together upon the private business of mankind, and making this metropolis a kind of emporium for the whole earth. I must confess I look upon high-change to be a great council, in which all considerable nations have their representatives. Factors in the trading world are what ambassadors are in the politic world ; they negotiate affairs, conclude treaties, and maintain a good correspondence between those wealthy societies of men that are divided from one another by seas and oceans, or live on the different extremities of a continent .. I have often been pleased to hear disputes adjusted between an inhabitant of Japan and an alderman of London, or to see a subject of the Great Mogul entering into a league with one of the Czar of Muscovy. I am

infinitely delighted in mixing with these several ministers of commerce, as they are distinguished by their different walks and different languages : sometimes I am jostled among a body of Armenians : sometimes I am lost in a crowd of Jews ; and sometimes make one in a group of Dutchmen. I am a Dane, Swede, or Frenchman at different times ; or rather fancy myself like the old philosopher, who upon being asked what countryman he was, replied that he was a citizen of the world.

Though I very frequently visit this busy multitude of people, I am known to nobody there but my friend Sir Andrew, who often smiles upon me as he sees me bustling in the crowd, but at the same time connives at my presence without taking any further notice of me. There is indeed a merchant of Egypt, who just knows me by sight, having formerly remitted me some money to Grand Cairo ; but as I am not versed in the modern Coptic, our conferences go no further than a bow and a grimace.

This grand scene of business gives me an infinite variety of solid and substantial entertainments. As I am a great lover of mankind, my heart naturally overflows with pleasure at the sight of a prosperous and happy multitude, insomuch that at many public solemnities I cannot forbear expressing my joy with tears that have stolen down my cheeks. For this reason I am wonderfully delighted to see such a body of men thriving in their own private fortunes, and at the same time promoting the public stock ; or in other

words, raising estates for their own families, by bringing into their country whatever is wanting, and carrying out of it whatever is superfluous.

Nature seems to have taken a particular care to disseminate her blessings among the different regions of the world, with an eye to this mutual intercourse and traffic among mankind, that the natives of the several parts of the globe might have a kind of dependence upon one another, and be united together by their common interest. Almost every degree produces something peculiar to it, The food often grows in one country, and the sauce in another. The fruits of Portugal are corrected by the products of Barbadoes ; the infusion of a China plant sweetened with the pith of an Indian cane. The Philippic Islands give a flavour to our European bowls. The single dress of a woman of quality is often the product of an hundred climates. The muff and the fan come together from the different ends of the earth. The scarf is sent from the torrid zone, and the tippet from beneath the pole. The brocade petticoat rises out of the mines of Peru, and the diamond necklace out of the bowels of Indostan.

If we consider our own country in its natural prospect, without any of the benefits and advantages of commerce, what a barren, uncomfortable spot of earth falls to our share ! Natural historians tell us, that no fruit grows originally among us, besides hips and haws, acorns and pig-nuts, with other delicacies of the like nature ; that our climate of itself, and without the assistances of art, can make no further advances

towards a plum than to a sloe, and carries an apple to no greater a perfection than a crab : that our melons, our peaches, our figs, our apricots, and cherries, are strangers among us, imported in different ages, and naturalized in our English gardens ; and that they would all degenerate and fall away into the trash of our own country, if they were wholly neglected by the planter, and left to the mercy of our sun and soil. Nor has traffic more enriched our vegetable world, than it has improved the whole face of nature among us. Our ships are laden with the harvest of every climate : our tables are stored with spices, and oils, and wines : our rooms are filled with pyramids of China, and adorned with the workmanship of Japan : our morning's draught comes to us from the remotest corners of the earth : we repair our bodies by the drugs of America, and repose ourselves under Indian canopies. My friend Sir Andrew calls the vineyards of France our gardens, the Spice-islands our hot-beds, the Persians our silk-weavers, and the Chinese our potters. Nature indeed furnishes us with the bare necessities of life, but traffic gives us a great variety of what is useful, and at the same time supplies us with everything that is convenient and ornamental. Nor is it the least part of this our happiness, that whilst we enjoy the remotest products of the north and south, we are free from those extremities of weather which give them birth ; that our eyes are refreshed with the green fields of Britain, at the same time that our palates are feasted with fruits that rise between the tropics.



For these reasons there are no more useful members in a commonwealth than merchants. They knit mankind together in a mutual intercourse of good offices, distribute the gifts of nature, find work for the poor, add wealth to the rich, and magnificence to the great. Our English merchant converts the tin of his own country into gold, and exchanges his wool for rubies. The Mahometans are clothed in our British manufacture, and the inhabitants of the frozen zone warmed with the fleeces of our sheep.

When I have been upon the 'Change, I have often fancied one of our old kings standing in person, where he is represented in effigy, and looking down upon the wealthy concourse of people with which that place is every day filled. In this case, how would he be surprised to hear all the languages of Europe spoken in this little spot of his former dominions, and to see so many private men, who in his time would have been the vassals of some powerful baron, negotiating like princes for greater sums of money than were formerly to be met with in the royal treasury ! Trade, without enlarging the British territories, has given us a kind of additional empire : it has multiplied the number of the rich, made our landed estates infinitely more valuable than they were formerly, and added to them an accession of other estates as valuable as the lands themselves.

*Chevy Chase*

*Interdum vulgus rectum videt.*—HOR.

WHEN I travelled, I took a particular delight in hearing the songs and fables that are come from father to son, and are most in vogue among the common people of the countries through which I passed; for it is impossible that anything should be universally tasted and approved by a multitude, though they are only the rabble of a nation, which hath not in it some peculiar aptness to please and gratify the mind of man. Human nature is the same in all reasonable creatures; and whatever falls in with it, will meet with admirers amongst readers of all qualities and conditions. Molière, as we are told by Monsieur Boileau, used to read all his comedies to an old woman who was his housekeeper, as she sat with him at her work by the chimney-corner; and could foretell the success of his play in the theatre from the reception it met with at his fireside; for he tells us the audience always followed the old woman, and never failed to laugh in the same place.

I know nothing which more shows the essential and inherent perfection of simplicity of thought, above that which I call the Gothic manner in writing, than this, that the first pleases all kinds of palates, and the latter only such as have formed to themselves a wrong artificial taste upon little fanciful authors and writers

of epigram. Homer, Virgil, or Milton, so far as the language of their poems is understood, will please a reader of plain common sense, who would neither relish nor comprehend an epigram of Martial or a poem of Cowley: so, on the contrary, an ordinary song or ballad that is the delight of the common people, cannot fail to please all such readers as are not unqualified for the entertainment by their affectation or ignorance; and the reason is plain, because the same paintings of nature which recommend it to the most ordinary reader, will appear beautiful to the most refined.

The old song of *Chevy Chase* is the favourite ballad of the common people of England; and Ben Jonson used to say he had rather have been the author of it than of all his works. Sir Philip Sidney, in his *Discourse of Poetry*, speaks of it in the following words: "I never heard the old song of Piercy and Douglas, that I found not my heart more moved than with a trumpet; and yet it is sung by some blind crowder with no rougher voice than rude style; which being so evil apparelled in the dust and cobweb of that uncivil age, what would it work trimmed in the gorgeous eloquence of Pindar?" For my own part, I am so professed an admirer of this antiquated song, that I shall give my reader a critique upon it, without any further apology for so doing.

The greatest modern critics have laid it down as a rule, that an heroic poem should be founded upon some important precept of morality, adapted to the constitution of the country in which the poet writes. Homer

and Virgil have formed their plans in this view. As Greece was a collection of many governments, who suffered very much among themselves, and gave the Persian emperor, who was their common enemy, many advantages over them by their mutual jealousies and animosities, Homer, in order to establish among them an union, which was so necessary for their safety, grounds his poem upon the discords of the several Grecian princes who were engaged in a confederacy against an Asiatic prince, and the several advantages which the enemy gained by such their discords. At the time the poem we are now treating of was written, the dissensions of the barons, who were then so many petty princes, ran very high, whether they quarrelled among themselves or with their neighbours, and produced unspeakable calamities to their country: the poet, to deter men from such unnatural contentions, describes a bloody battle and dreadful scene of death, occasioned by the mutual feuds which reigned in the families of an English and Scotch nobleman: that he designed this for the instruction of his poem, we may learn from his four last lines, in which, after the example of the modern tragedians, he draws from it a precept for the benefit of his readers.

God save the King, and bless the land  
In plenty, joy, and peace;  
And grant henceforth that foul debate  
'Twixt noblemen may cease.

The next point observed by the greatest heroic poets, hath been to celebrate persons and actions which

do honour to their country : thus Virgil's hero was the founder of Rome, Homer's a prince of Greece ; and for this reason Valerius Flaccus and Statius, who were both Romans, might be justly derided for having chosen the expedition of the Golden Fleece, and the wars of Thebes, for the subjects of their epic writings.

The poet before us has not only found out an hero in his own country, but raises the reputation of it by several beautiful incidents. The English are the first who take the field, and the last who quit it. The English bring only fifteen hundred to the battle, the Scotch two thousand. The English keep the field with fifty-three : the Scotch retire with fifty-five : all the rest on each side being slain in battle. But the most remarkable circumstance of this kind, is the different manner in which the Scotch and English kings receive the news of this fight, and of the great men's deaths who commanded in it.

This news was brought to Edinburgh,  
Where Scotland's King did reign,  
That brave Earl Douglas suddenly  
Was with an arrow slain.

Oh heavy news, King James did say,  
Scotland can witness be,  
I have not any captain more  
Of such account as he.

Like tidings to King Henry came  
Within as short a space,  
That Piercy of Northumberland  
Was slain in Chevy-Chase.

Now God be with him, said our King,  
 Sith 'twill no better be,  
 I trust I have within my realm  
 Five hundred as good as he.

Yet shall not Scot nor Scotland say  
 But I will vengeance take,  
 And be revenged on them all  
 For brave Lord Piercy's sake.

This vow full well the King perform'd  
 After on Humble-down,  
 In one day fifty knights were slain,  
 With lords of great renown.

And of the rest of sma<sup>ll</sup> account  
 Did many thousands dye, etc.

At the same time that our poet shows a laudable partiality to his countrymen, he represents the Scots after a manner not unbecoming so bold and brave a people.

Earl Douglas on a milk-white steed,  
 Most like a baron bold,  
 Rode foremost of the company,  
 Whose armour shone like gold.

His sentiments and actions are every way suitable to an hero. One of us two, says he, must die : I am an earl as well as yourself, so that you can have no pretence for refusing the combat ; however, says he, 'tis pity, and indeed would be a sin, that so many innocent men should perish for our sakes, rather let you and I end our quarrel in single fight.

Ere thus I will out-braved be,  
 One of us two shall dye ;  
 I know thee well, an Earl thou art,  
 Lord Piercy, so am I.

But trust me, Piercy, pity it were,  
And great offence, to kill  
Any of these our harmless men,  
For they have done no ill.  
Let thou and I the battle try,  
And set our men aside.  
Accurst be he, Lord Piercy said,  
By whom this is deny'd.

When these brave men had distinguished themselves in the battle and in single combat with each other, in the midst of a generous parley, full of heroic sentiments, the Scotch earl falls ; and with his dying words encourages his men to revenge his death, representing to them, as the most bitter circumstances of it, that his rival saw him fall.

With that there came an arrow keen  
Out of an English bow,  
Which struck Earl Douglas to the heart  
A deep and deadly blow.

Who never spoke more words than these,  
Fight on, my merry men all,  
For why, my life is at an end,  
Lord Piercy sees me fall.

Merry men, in the language of those times, is no more than a cheerful word for companions and fellow-soldiers. A passage in the eleventh book of Virgil's *Aeneids* is very much to be admired, where Camilla in her last agonies, instead of weeping over the wound she had received, as one might have expected from a warrior of her sex, considers only (like the hero of whom we are now speaking) how the battle should be continued after her death.

*Tum sic expirans, etc.*

A gathering mist o'erclouds her cheerful eyes,  
 And from her cheeks the rosy colour flies ;  
 Then turns to her, whom, of her female train,  
 She trusted most, and thus she speaks with pain.  
 Acca, 'tis past ! he swims before my sight,  
 Inexorable death ; and claims his right  
 Bear my last words to Turnus ; fly with speed,  
 And bid him timely to my charge succeed :  
 Repel the Trojans, and the town relieve :  
 Farewell.—

Turnus did not die in so heroic a manner, though our poet seems to have had his eye upon Turnus's speech in the last verse,

Lord Piercy sees me fall.

—*Vicisti, et victum tendere palmas*  
*Ausoni videre*—

Earl Piercy's lamentation over his enemy is generous, beautiful, and passionate ; I must only caution the reader not to let the simplicity of the style, which one may well pardon in so old a poet, prejudice him against the greatness of the thought.

Then leaving life, Earl Piercy took  
 The dead man by the hand,  
 And said, Earl Douglas, for thy life  
 Would I had lost my land.

O Christ ! my very heart doth bleed  
 With sorrow for thy sake ;  
 For sure a more renowned knight  
 Mischance did never take.

That beautiful line, *taking the dead man by the hand*, will put the reader in mind of Aeneas's behaviour



towards Lausus, whom he himself had slain as he came to the rescue of his aged father.

*At vero ut, vultum vidit morientis, et ora,  
Ora modis Anchisiades pallentia miris :  
Ingemuit miserans graviter, dextramque tetendit, etc.*

The pious prince beheld young Lausus dead ;  
He grieved, he wept ; then grasped his hand, and said,  
Poor hapless youth ! what praises can be paid  
To worth so great— !

I shall take another opportunity to consider the other parts of this old song.

*The Spectator*, No. 70.

Monday, May 21, 1711.

## LI

### *The Everlasting Club*

*—Genus immortale manet, multosque per annos  
Stat fortuna domus, et avi numerantur avorum.—VIRG.*

HAVING already given my reader an account of several extraordinary clubs, both ancient and modern, I did not design to have troubled him with any more narratives of this nature ; but I have lately received information of a club which I can call neither ancient nor modern, that I dare say will be no less surprising to my reader than it was to myself ; for which reason I shall communicate it to the public as one of the greatest curiosities in its kind.

A friend of mine complaining of a tradesman who is related to him, after having represented him as a very

idle, worthless fellow, who neglected his family, and spent most of his time over a bottle, told me, to conclude his character, that he was a member of the Everlasting Club. So very odd a title raised my curiosity to inquire into the nature of a club that had such a sounding name; upon which my friend gave me the following account.

“The Everlasting Club consists of a hundred members, who divide the whole twenty-four hours among them in such a manner, that the club sits day and night from one end of the year to another, no party presuming to rise till they are relieved by those who are in course to succeed them. By this means a member of the Everlasting Club never wants company; for though he is not upon duty himself, he is sure to find some who are; so that if he be disposed to take a whet, a nooning, an evening’s draught, or a bottle after midnight, he goes to the club and finds a knot of friends to his mind.

“It is a maxim in this club that the steward never dies; for as they succeed one another by way of rotation, no man is to quit the great elbow-chair which stands at the upper end of the table, till his successor is in a readiness to fill it; insomuch that there has not been a *Sede vacante* in the memory of man.

“This club was instituted towards the end (or, as some of them say, about the middle) of the Civil Wars, and continued without interruption till the time of the Great Fire, which burnt them out and dispersed them for several weeks. The steward at that time main-

tained his post till he had like to have been blown up with a neighbouring house (which was demolished in order to stop the fire), and would not leave the chair at last, till he had emptied all the bottles upon the table, and received repeated directions from the club to withdraw himself. This steward is frequently talked of in the club, and looked upon by every member of it as a greater man than the famous captain mentioned in my Lord Clarendon, who was burnt in his ship because he would not quit it without orders. It is said that towards the close of 1700, being the great year of jubilee, the club had it under consideration whether they should break up or continue their session ; but, after many speeches and debates, it was at length agreed to sit out the other century. This resolution passed in a general club *Nemine contradicente.*"

Having given this short account of the institution and continuation of the Everlasting Club, I should here endeavour to say something of the manners and characters of its several members, which I shall do according to the best light I have received in this matter.

It appears by their books in general, that since their first institution they have smoked fifty ton of tobacco, drank thirty thousand butts of ale, one thousand hogsheads of red port, two hundred barrels of brandy, and a kilderkin of small beer. There has been likewise a great consumption of cards. It is also said that they observe the law in Ben Jonson's club, which orders the fire to be always kept in (*focus perennis esto*), as

well for the convenience of lighting their pipes as to cure the dampness of the club-room. They have an old woman in the nature of a vestal, whose business it is to cherish and perpetuate the fire, which burns from generation to generation, and has seen the glass-house fires in and out above an hundred times.

The Everlasting Club treats all other clubs with an eye of contempt, and talks even of the Kit-Cat and October as of a couple of upstarts. Their ordinary discourse (as much as I have been able to learn of it) turns altogether upon such adventures as have passed in their own assembly; of members who have taken the glass in their turns for a week together, without stirring out of the club; of others who have smoked an hundred pipes at a sitting; of others who have not missed their morning's draught for twenty years together; sometimes they speak in raptures of a run of ale in King Charles's reign, and sometimes reflect with astonishment upon games at whisk, which have been miraculously recovered by members of the society, when in all human probability the case was desperate.

They delight in several old catches, which they sing at all hours to encourage one another to moisten their clay, and grow immortal by drinking; with many other edifying exhortations of the like nature.

There are four general clubs held in a year, at which times they fill up vacancies, appoint waiters, confirm the old fire-maker or elect a new one, settle contributions for coals, pipes, tobacco, and other necessaries.

The senior member has outlived the whole club twice over, and has been drunk with the grandfathers of some of the present sitting members.

*The Spectator*, No. 72.

Wednesday, May 23, 1711.

## LII

### *Party Patches*

*Qualis ubi audito venantum murmure tigris  
Horruit in maculas —* STATIUS.

ABOUT the middle of last winter I went to see an opera at the theatre in the Haymarket, where I could not but take notice of two parties of very fine women, that had placed themselves in the opposite side-boxes, and seemed drawn up in a kind of battle-array one against another. After a short survey of them, I found they were patched differently; the faces on one hand being spotted on the right side of the forehead, and those upon the other on the left. I quickly perceived that they cast hostile glances upon one another, and that their patches were placed in those different situations as party-signals to distinguish friends from foes. In the middle boxes, between these two opposite bodies, were several ladies who patched indifferently on both sides of their faces, and seemed to sit there with no other intention but to see the opera. Upon inquiry I found, that the body of Amazons on my right hand were Whigs, and those on my left Tories; and that

those who had placed themselves in the middle boxes were a neutral party, whose faces had not yet declared themselves. These last, however, as I afterwards found, diminished daily, and took their party with one side or the other; insomuch that I observed in several of them, the patches, which were before dispersed equally, are now all gone over to the Whig or the Tory side of the face. The censorious say, that the men, whose hearts are aimed at, are very often the occasions that one part of the face is thus dishonoured, and lies under a kind of disgrace, while the other is so much set off and adorned by the owner; and that the patches turn to the right or to the left, according to the principles of the man who is most in favour. But whatever may be the motives of a few fantastical coquettes, who do not patch for the public good so much as for their own private advantage, it is certain, that there are several women of honour who patch out of principle, and with an eye to the interest of their country. Nay, I am informed that some of them adhere so stedfastly to their party, and are so far from sacrificing their zeal for the public to their passions for any particular person, that in a late draught of marriage-articles a lady has stipulated with her husband, that, whatever his opinions are, she shall be at liberty to patch on which side she pleases.

I must here take notice that Rosalinda, a famous Whig partisan, has most unfortunately a very beautiful mole on the Tory part of her forehead; which, being very conspicuous, has occasioned many mistakes, and

given an handle to her enemies to misrepresent her face, as though it had revolted from the Whig interest. But, whatever this natural patch may seem to insinuate, it is well known that her notions of government are still the same. This unlucky mole, however, has misled several coxcombs ; and, like the hanging out of false colours, made some of them converse with Rosalinda in what they thought the spirit of her party, when on a sudden she has given them an unexpected fire, that has sunk them all at once. If Rosalinda is unfortunate in her mole, Nigranilla is as unhappy in a pimple, which forces her, against her inclinations, to patch on the Whig side.

I am told that many virtuous matrons, who formerly have been taught to believe that this artificial spotting of the face was unlawful, are now reconciled by a zeal for their cause, to what they could not be prompted by a concern for their beauty. This way of declaring war upon one another, puts me in mind of what is reported of the tigress, that several spots rise in her skin when she is angry, or, as Mr. Cowley has imitated the verses that stand as the motto of this paper,

—She swells with angry pride,  
And calls forth all her spots on every side.

When I was in the theatre the time above-mentioned, I had the curiosity to count the patches on both sides, and found the Tory patches to be about twenty stronger than the Whig ; but to make amends for this small inequality, I the next morning found the whole puppet-

show filled with faces spotted after the Whiggish manner. Whether or no the ladies had retreated hither in order to rally their forces, I cannot tell; but the next night they came in so great a body to the opera, that they out-numbered the enemy.

This account of party-patches will, I am afraid, appear improbable to those who live at a distance from the fashionable world; but as it is a distinction of a very singular nature, and what perhaps may never meet with a parallel, I think I should not have discharged the office of a faithful SPECTATOR, had I not recorded it.

I have, in former papers, endeavoured to expose this party-rage in women, as it only serves to aggravate the hatred and animosities that reign among men, and in a great measure deprives the fair sex of those peculiar charms with which nature has endowed them.

When the Romans and Sabines were at war, and just upon the point of giving battle, the women, who were allied to both of them, interposed with so many tears and entreaties, that they prevented the mutual slaughter which threatened both parties, and united them together in a firm and lasting peace.

I would recommend this noble example to our British ladies, at a time when their country is torn with so many unnatural divisions, that if they continue, it will be a misfortune to be born in it. The Greeks thought it so improper for women to interest themselves in competitions and contentions, that for this reason, among others, they forbade them, under pain of death,



to be present at the Olympic games, notwithstanding these were the public diversions of all Greece.

As our English women excel those of all nations in beauty, they should endeavour to outshine them in all other accomplishments proper to the sex, and to distinguish themselves as tender mothers and faithful wives, rather than as furious partisans. Female virtues are of a domestic turn. The family is the proper province for private women to shine in. If they must be showing their zeal for the public, let it not be against those who are perhaps of the same family, or at least of the same religion or nation, but against those who are the open, professed, undoubted enemies of their faith, liberty, and country. When the Romans were pressed with a foreign enemy, the ladies voluntarily contributed all their rings and jewels to assist the government under a public exigence; which appeared so laudable an action in the eyes of their countrymen, that from thenceforth it was permitted by a law to pronounce public orations at the funeral of a woman in praise of the deceased person, which till that time was peculiar to men. Would our English ladies, instead of sticking on a patch against those of their own country, show themselves so truly public-spirited as to sacrifice every one her necklace against the common enemy, what decrees ought not to be made in favour of them?

Since I am recollecting upon this subject such passages as occur to my memory out of ancient authors, I cannot omit a sentence in the celebrated funeral

oration of Pericles, which he made in honour of those brave Athenians that were slain in a fight with the Lacedaemonians. After having addressed himself to the several ranks and orders of his countrymen, and shown them how they should behave themselves in the public cause, he turns to the female part of his audience ; “ And as for you,” says he, “ I shall advise you in very few words : aspire only to those virtues that are peculiar to your sex ; follow your natural modesty, and think it your greatest commendation, not to be talked of one way or other.”

*The Spectator*, No. 81.

Saturday, June 2, 1711.

### LIII

#### *A Dream of Painters*

— *Animum pictura pascit inani* —VIRG.

WHEN the weather hinders me from taking my diversions without doors, I frequently make a little party with two or three select friends, to visit anything curious that may be seen under covert. My principal entertainments of this nature are pictures, insomuch that when I have found the weather set in to be very bad, I have taken a whole day's journey to see a gallery that is furnished by the hands of great masters. By this means, when the heavens are filled with clouds, when the earth swims in rain, and all nature wears a lowering countenance, I withdraw myself from these

uncomfortable scenes into the visionary worlds of art ; where I meet with shining landscapes, gilded triumphs, beautiful faces, and all those other objects that fill the mind with gay ideas, and disperse that gloominess which is apt to hang upon it in those dark disconsolate seasons.

I was some weeks ago in a course of these diversions, which had taken such an entire possession of my imagination, that they formed in it a short morning's dream, which I shall communicate to my reader, rather as the first sketch and outlines of a vision than as a finished piece.

I dreamt that I was admitted into a long spacious gallery, which had one side covered with pieces of all the famous painters who are now living, and the other with the works of the greatest masters that are dead.

On the side of the living I saw several persons busy in drawing, colouring, and designing ; on the side of the dead painters I could not discover more than one person at work, who was exceeding slow in his motions, and wonderfully nice in his touches.

I was resolved to examine the several artists that stood before me, and accordingly applied myself to the side of the living. The first I observed at work in this part of the gallery was Vanity, with his hair tied behind him in a ribbon, and dressed like a Frenchman. All the faces he drew were very remarkable for their smiles, and a certain smirking air which he bestowed indifferently on every age and degree of either sex. The *toujours gai* appeared even in his

judges, bishops, and privy-councillors: in a word, all his men were *petits maitres*, and all his women coquettes. The drapery of his figures was extremely well suited to his faces, and was made up of all the glaring colours that could be mixed together; every part of the dress was in a flutter, and endeavoured to distinguish itself above the rest.

On the left hand of Vanity stood a laborious workman, who I found was his humble admirer, and copied after him. He was dressed like a German, and had a very hard name that sounded something like Stupidity.

The third artist that I looked over was Fantastique, dressed like a Venetian scaramouch. He had an excellent hand at a chimera, and dealt very much in distortions and grimaces. He would sometimes affright himself with the phantoms that flowed from his pencil. In short, the most elaborate of his pieces was at best but a terrifying dream; and one could say nothing more of his finest figures, than that they were agreeable monsters.

The fourth person I examined was very remarkable for his hasty hand, which left his picture so unfinished that the beauty in the picture (which was designed to continue as a monument of it to posterity) faded soon than in the person after whom it was drawn. He made so much haste to dispatch his business, that he neither gave himself time to clean his pencils nor mix his colours. The name of this expeditious workman was Avarice.

Not far from this artist I saw another of a quite different nature, who was dressed in the habit of a Dutchman, and known by the name of Industry. His figures were wonderfully laboured: if he drew the portraiture of a man, he did not omit a single hair in his face; if the figure of a ship, there was not a rope among the tackle that escaped him. He had likewise hung a great part of the wall with night-pieces, that seemed to show themselves by the candles which were lighted up in several parts of them; and were so inflamed by the sunshine which accidentally fell upon them, that at first sight I could scarce forbear crying out, Fire.

The five foregoing artists were the most considerable on this side the gallery; there were indeed several others whom I had not time to look into. One of them, however, I could not forbear observing, who was very busy in retouching the finest pieces, though he produced no originals of his own. His pencil aggravated every feature that was before over-charged, loaded every defect, and poisoned every colour it touched. Though this workman did so much mischief on the side of the living, he never turned his eye towards that of the dead. His name was Envy.

Having taken a cursory view of one side of the gallery, I turned myself to that which was filled by the works of those great masters that were dead; when immediately I fancied myself standing before a multitude of spectators, and thousands of eyes looking upon me at once; for all before me appeared so like men and women,

that I almost forgot they were pictures. Raphael's figures stood in one row, Titian's in another, Guido Rheni's in a third. One part of the wall was peopled by Hannibal Carrache, another by Correggio, and another by Rubens. To be short, there was not a great master among the dead who had not contributed to the embellishment of this side of the gallery. The persons that owed their being to these several masters, appeared all of them to be real and alive, and differed among one another only in the variety of their shapes, complexions, and clothes ; so that they looked like different nations of the same species.

Observing an old man (who was the same person I before mentioned, as the only artist that was at work on this side of the gallery) creeping up and down from one picture to another, and retouching all the fine pieces that stood before me, I could not but be very attentive to all his motions. I found his pencil was so very light that it worked imperceptibly, and after a thousand touches scarce produced any visible effect in the picture on which he was employed. However, as he busied himself incessantly, and repeated touch after touch without rest or intermission, he wore off insensibly every little disagreeable gloss that hung upon a figure. He also added such a beautiful brown to the shades, and mellowness to the colours, that he made every picture appear more perfect than when it came fresh from the master's pencil. I could not forbear looking upon the face of this ancient workman, and immediately,

by the long lock of hair upon his forehead, discovered him to be Time.

Whether it were because the thread of my dream was at an end I cannot tell, but upon my taking a survey of this imaginary old man, my sleep left me.

*The Spectator*, No. 83.

Tuesday, June 5, 1711.

## LIV

### *Pastimes*

—*Spatio brevi*  
*Spem longam reseces : dum loquimur, iugeri munda*  
*Aetas : carpe diem, quam minimum credula postero*  
 HOR.

WE all of us complain of the shortness of time, saith Seneca, and yet have much more than we know what to do with. "Our lives," says he, "are spent either in doing nothing at all, or in doing nothing to the purpose, or in doing nothing that we ought to do : we are always complaining our days are few, and acting as though there would be no end of them." That noble philosopher has described our inconsistency with ourselves in this particular, by all those various turns of expression and thought which are peculiar to his writings.

I often consider mankind as wholly inconsistent with itself in a point that bears some affinity to the former. Though we seem grieved at the shortness of life in general, we are wishing every period of it at an end. The minor longs to be at age, then to be a man of business, then to make up an estate, then to arrive at

honours, then to retire. Thus although the whole of life is allowed by every one to be short, the several divisions of it appear long and tedious. We are for lengthening our span in general, but would fain contract the parts of which it is composed. The usurer would be very well satisfied to have all the time annihilated that lies between the present moment and next quarter-day. The politician would be contented to lose three years in his life, could he place things in the posture which he fancies they will stand in after such a revolution of time. The lover would be glad to strike out of his existence all the moments that are to pass away before the happy meeting. Thus, as fast as our time runs, we should be very glad in most parts of our lives that it ran much faster than it does. Several hours of the day hang upon our hands, nay, we wish away whole years ; and travel through time as through a country filled with many wild and empty wastes, which we would fain hurry over, that we may arrive at those several little settlements or imaginary points of rest which are dispersed up and down in it.

If we divide the life of most men into twenty parts, we shall find that at least nineteen of them are mere gaps and chasms, which are neither filled with pleasure nor business. I do not however include in this calculation the life of those men who are in a perpetual hurry of affairs, but of those only who are not always engaged in scenes of action ; and I hope I shall not do an unacceptable piece of service to these persons, if I point out to them certain methods for the filling up of their empty



shall not determine ; but I think it is very wonderful to see persons of the best sense passing away a dozen hours together in shuffling and dividing a pack of cards, with no other conversation but what is made up of a few game phrases, and no other ideas but those of black or red spots ranged together in different figures. Would not a man laugh to hear any one of this species complaining that life is short ?

The stage might be made a perpetual source of the most noble and useful entertainments, were it under proper regulations.

But the mind never unbends itself so agreeably as in the conversation of a well-chosen friend. There is indeed no blessing of life that is any way comparable to the enjoyment of a discreet and virtuous friend. It eases and unloads the mind, clears and improves the understanding, engenders thoughts and knowledge, animates virtue and good resolution, soothes and allays the passions, and finds employment for most of the vacant hours of life.

Next to such an intimacy with a particular person, one would endeavour after a more general conversation with such as are able to entertain and improve those with whom they converse, which are qualifications that seldom go asunder.

There are many other useful amusements of life, which one would endeavour to multiply, that one might on all occasions have recourse to something rather than suffer the mind to lie idle, or run adrift with any passion that chances to rise in it.

A man that has a taste of music, painting, or architecture, is like one that has another sense, when compared with such as have no relish of those arts. The florist, the planter, the gardener, the husbandman, when they are only as accomplishments to the man of fortune, are great reliefs to a country life, and many ways useful to those who are possessed of them.

But of all the diversions of life, there is none so proper to fill up its empty spaces as the reading of useful and entertaining authors. But this I shall only touch upon, because it in some measure interferes with the third method, which I shall propose in another paper, for the employment of our dead unactive hours, and which I shall only mention in general to be the pursuit of knowledge.

*The Spectator*, No. 93.

Saturday, June 16, 1711.

## LV

### *The Relativity of Time*

—*Hoc est*

*Vivere bis, vita posse priore frui.*—MART.

THE last method which I proposed in my Saturday's paper, for filling up those empty spaces of life which are tedious and burdensome to idle people, is the employing ourselves in the pursuit of knowledge. I remember Mr. Boyle, speaking of a certain mineral, tells us that a man may consume his whole life in the study of it, without arriving at the knowledge of all

its qualities. The truth of it is, there is not a single science, or any branch of it, that might not furnish a man with business for life, though it were much longer than it is.

I shall not here engage on those beaten subjects of the usefulness of knowledge, nor of the pleasure and perfection it gives the mind, nor on the methods of attaining it, nor recommend any particular branch of it, all which have been the topics of many other writers, but, shall indulge myself in a speculation that is more uncommon, and may therefore perhaps be more entertaining.

I have before shown how the unemployed parts of life appear long and tedious, and shall here endeavour to show how those parts of life which are exercised in study, reading, and the pursuits of knowledge, are long, but not tedious, and by that means discover a method of lengthening our lives, and at the same time of turning all the parts of them to our advantage.

Mr. Locke observes, "That we get the idea of time, or duration, by reflecting on that train of ideas which succeed one another in our minds: that for this reason, when we sleep soundly, without dreaming, we have no perception of time, or the length of it, whilst we sleep; and that the moment wherein we leave off to think, till the moment we begin to think again, seems to have no distance." To which the author adds, "And so I doubt not but it would be to a waking man, if it were possible for him to keep only one idea in his mind, without variation, and the succession of others; and

we see, that one who fixes his thoughts very intently on one thing, so as to take but little notice of the succession of ideas that pass in his mind whilst he is taken up with that earnest contemplation, lets slip out of his account a good part of that duration, and thinks that time shorter than it is."

We might carry this thought further, and consider a man as, on one side, shortening his time by thinking on nothing, or but a few things; so, on the other, as lengthening it, by employing his thoughts on many subjects, or by entertaining a quick and constant succession of ideas. Accordingly Monsieur Malebranche in his *Inquiry after Truth* (which was published several years before Mr. Locke's *Essay on Human Understanding*) tells us, that it is possible some creatures may think half an hour as long as we do a thousand years; or look upon that space of duration which we call a minute, as an hour, a week, a month, or an whole age.

This notion of Monsieur Malebranche is capable of some little explanation from what I have quoted out of Mr. Locke: for if our notion of time is produced by our reflecting on the succession of ideas in our mind, and this succession may be infinitely accelerated or retarded, it will follow, that different beings may have different notions of the same parts of duration, according as their ideas, which we suppose are equally distinct in each of them, follow one another in a greater or less degree of rapidity.

There is a famous passage in the *Alcoran*, which

looks as if Mahomet had been possessed of the notion we are now speaking of. It is there said, that the angel Gabriel took Mahomet out of his bed one morning to give him a sight of all things in the seven heavens, in paradise, and in hell, which the prophet took a distinct view of ; and after having held ninety thousand conferences with God, was brought back again to his bed. All this, says the *Alcoran*, was transacted in so small a space of time, that Mahomet at his return found his bed still warm, and took up an earthen pitcher (which was thrown down at the very instant that the angel Gabriel carried him away) before the water was all spilt.

There is a very pretty story in the *Turkish Tales* which relates to this passage of that famous impostor, and bears some affinity to the subject we are now upon.

A sultan of Egypt, who was an infidel, used to laugh at this circumstance in Mahomet's life, as what was altogether impossible and absurd ; but conversing one day with a great doctor in the law, who had the gift of working miracles, the doctor told him he would quickly convince him of the truth of this passage in the history of Mahomet, if he would consent to do what he should desire of him. Upon this the sultan was directed to place himself by an huge tub of water, which he did accordingly ; and as he stood by the tub amidst a circle of his great men, the holy man bid him plunge his head into the water and draw it up again ; the king accordingly thrust his head into the water, and at the same time found himself at the foot of a

mountain on a seashore. The king immediately began to rage against his doctor for this piece of treachery and witchcraft ; but at length, knowing it was in vain to be angry, he set himself to think on proper methods for getting a livelihood in this strange country : accordingly he applied himself to some people whom he saw at work in a neighbouring wood ; these people conducted him to a town that stood at a little distance from the wood, where, after some adventures, he married a woman of great beauty and fortune. He lived with this woman so long till he had by her seven sons and seven daughters : he was afterwards reduced to great want, and forced to think of plying in the streets as a porter for his livelihood. One day as he was walking alone by the seaside, being seized with many melancholy reflections upon his former and his present state of life, which had raised a fit of devotion in him, he threw off his clothes with a design to wash himself, according to the custom of the Mahometans, before he said his prayers.

After his first plunge into the sea, he no sooner raised his head above the water but he found himself standing by the side of the tub, with the great men of his court about him, and the holy man at his side. He immediately upbraided his teacher for having sent him on such a course of adventures, and betrayed him into so long a state of misery and servitude ; but was wonderfully surprised when he heard that the state he talked of was only a dream and delusion ; that he had not stirred from the place where he then stood ;

and that he had only dipped his head into the water, and immediately taken it out again.

The Mahometan doctor took this occasion of instructing the sultan, that nothing was impossible with God ; and that he, with whom a thousand years are but as one day, can, if he pleases, make a single day, nay a single moment, appear to any of his creatures as a thousand years.

I shall leave my reader to compare these Eastern fables with the notions of those two great philosophers whom I have quoted in this paper ; and shall only, by way of application, desire him to consider how we may extend life beyond its natural dimensions, by applying ourselves diligently to the pursuits of knowledge.

The hours of a wise man are lengthened by his ideas, as those of a fool are by his passions : the time of the one is long, because he does not know what to do with it ; so is that of the other, because he distinguishes every moment of it with useful or amusing thoughts ; or in other words, because the one is always wishing it away, and the other always enjoying it.

How different is the view of past life, in the man who is grown old in knowledge and wisdom, from that of him who is grown old in ignorance and folly ? The latter is like the owner of a barren country, that fills his eye with the prospect of naked hills and plains, which produce nothing either profitable or ornamental ; the other beholds a beautiful and spacious landscape, divided into delightful gardens, green meadows, fruitful

fields, and can scarce cast his eye on a single spot of his possessions, that is not covered with some beautiful plant or flower.

*The Spectator*, No. 94.

Monday, June 18, 1711.

## LVI

### *The Verdict of Posterity*

*Romulus, et Liber pater, et cum Castore Pollux,  
Post ingenua facta, decoram in templa recepi.  
Lum terras hominumque colunt genus, aspera bella  
Componunt, agros assignant, oppida condunt;  
Plorare suis non respondere favorem  
Speratum mentis :-*

IIOR.

CENSURE, says a late ingenious author, "is the tax a man pays to the public for being eminent." It is a folly for an eminent man to think of escaping it, and a weakness to be affected with it. All the illustrious persons of antiquity, and indeed of every age in the world, have passed through this fiery persecution. There is no defence against reproach but obscurity; it is a kind of concomitant to greatness, as satires and invectives were an essential part of a Roman triumph.

If men of eminence are exposed to censure on one hand, they are as much liable to flattery on the other. If they receive reproaches which are not due to them, they likewise receive praises which they do not deserve. In a word, the man in a high post is never regarded with an indifferent eye, but always considered as a friend or an enemy. For this reason persons in great



stations have seldom their true characters drawn till several years after their deaths. Their personal friendships and enmities must cease, and the parties they were engaged in be at an end, before their faults or their virtues can have justice done them. When writers have the least opportunities of knowing the truth, they are in the best disposition to tell it.

It is therefore the privilege of posterity to adjust the characters of illustrious persons, and to set matters right between those antagonists, who by their rivalry for greatness divided a whole age into factions. We can now allow Caesar to be a great man, without derogating from Pompey ; and celebrate the virtues of Cato, without detracting from those of Caesar. Every one that has been long dead has a due proportion of praise allotted him, in which whilst he lived his friends were too profuse, and his enemies too sparing.

According to Sir Isaac Newton's calculations, the last comet that made its appearance in 1680, imbibed so much heat by its approaches to the sun, that it would have been 'two thousand times hotter than red-hot iron, had it been a globe of that metal ; and that supposing it as big as the earth, and at the same distance from the sun, it would be fifty thousand years in cooling, before it recovered its natural temper. In the like manner, if an Englishman considers the great ferment into which our political world is thrown at present, and how intensely it is heated in all its parts, he cannot suppose that it will cool again in less than three hundred years. In such a tract of time it is

possible that the heats of the present age may be extinguished, and our several classes of great men represented under their proper characters. Some eminent historian may then probably arise that will not write *recentibus odiis* (as Tacitus expresses it) with the passions and prejudices of a contemporary author, but make an impartial distribution of fame among the great men of the present age.

I cannot forbear entertaining myself very often with the idea of such an imaginary historian describing the reign of ANNE the First, and introducing it with a preface to his reader, that he is now entering upon the most shining part of the English story. The great rivals in fame will then be distinguished according to their respective merits, and shine in their proper points of light. Such an one (says the historian), though variously represented by the writers of his own age, appears to have been a man of more than ordinary abilities, great application, and uncommon integrity; nor was such an one (though of an opposite party and interest) inferior to him in any of these respects. The several antagonists who now endeavour to depreciate one another, and are celebrated or traduced by different parties, will then have the same body of admirers, and appear illustrious in the opinion of the whole British nation. The deserving man, who can now recommend himself to the esteem of but half his countrymen, will then receive the approbations and applauses of a whole age.

Among the several persons that flourish in this

glorious reign, there is no question but such a future historian as the person of whom I am speaking will make mention of the men of genius and learning, who have now any figure in the British nation. For my own part, I often flatter myself with the honourable mention which will then be made of me: and have drawn up a paragraph in my own imagination, that I fancy will not be altogether unlike what will be found in some page or other of this imaginary historian.

It was under this reign, says he, that the *SPECTATOR* published those little diurnal essays which are still extant. We know very little of the name or person of this author, except only that he was a man of a very short face, extremely addicted to silence, and so great a lover of knowledge, that he made a voyage to Grand Cairo for no other reason but to take the measure of a pyramid. His chief friend was one Sir Roger de Coverley, a whimsical country knight, and a Templar whose name he has not transmitted to us. He lived as a lodger at the house of a widow-woman, and was a great humorist in all parts of his life. This is all we can affirm with any certainty of his person and character. As for his speculations, notwithstanding the several obsolete words and obscure phrases of the age in which he lived, we still understand enough of them to see the diversions and characters of the English nation in his time: not but that we are to make allowance for the mirth and humour of the author, who has doubtless strained many representations of things beyond the truth. For if we interpret his words in

their literal meaning, we must suppose that women of the first quality used to pass away whole mornings at a puppet-show: that they attested their principles by their patches: that an audience would sit out an evening to hear a dramatical performance written in a language which they did not understand: that chairs and flower-pots were introduced as actors upon the British stage: that a promiscuous assembly of men and women were allowed to meet at midnight in masques within the verge of the court; with many improbabilities of the like nature. We must therefore, in these and the like cases, suppose that these remote hints and allusions aimed at some certain follies which were then in vogue, and which at present we have not any notion of. We may guess by several passages in the speculations, that there were writers who endeavoured to detract from the works of this author; but as nothing of this nature is come down to us, we cannot guess at any objections that could be made to his paper. If we consider his style with that indulgence which we must show to old English writers, or if we look into the variety of his subjects, with those several critical dissertations, moral reflections, \*

*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*•	*	*	*

The following part of the paragraph is so much to my advantage, and beyond anything I can pretend to, that I hope my reader will excuse me for not inserting it.

## LVII

6 *The Exercise of the Fan*

—*Lusus animo debent aliquando dari,  
Ad cogitandum melior ut redeat sibi.*— PHAEDR.

I DO not know whether to call the following letter a satire upon coquettes, or a representation of their several fantastical accomplishments, or what other title to give it ; but as it is I shall communicate it to the public. It will sufficiently explain its own intentions, so that I shall give it my reader at length, without either preface or postscript.

“MR. SPECTATOR—Women are armed with fans as men with swords, and sometimes do more execution with them. To the end therefore that ladies may be entire mistresses of the weapon which they bear, I have erected an Academy for the training up of young women in the Exercise of the Fan, according to the most fashionable airs and motions that are now practised at court. The ladies who carry fans under me are drawn up twice a day in my great hall, where they are instructed in the use of their arms, and exercised by the following words of command :

*Handle your Fans,  
Unfurl your Fans,  
Discharge your Fans,  
Ground your Fans,  
Recover your Fans,  
Flutter your Fans,*

By the right observation of these few plain words of command, a woman of a tolerable genius, who will apply herself diligently to her exercise for the space of but one half-year, shall be able to give her fan all the graces that can possibly enter into that little modish machine.

“But to the end that my readers may form to themselves a right notion of this exercise, I beg leave to explain it to them in all its parts. When my female regiment is drawn up in array, with every one her weapon in her hand, upon my giving the word to *handle their fans*, each of them shakes her fan at me with a smile, then gives her right-hand woman a tap upon the shoulder, then presses her lips with the extremity of her fan, then lets her arms fall in an easy motion, and stands in readiness to receive the next word of command. All this is done with a close fan, and is generally learned in the first week.

“The next motion is that of *unfurling the fan*, in which are comprehended several little flirts and vibrations, as also gradual and deliberate openings, with many voluntary fallings asunder in the fan itself, that are seldom learned under a month’s practice. This part of the exercise pleases the spectators more than any other, as it discovers on a sudden an infinite number of Cupids, garlands, altars, birds, beasts, rainbows, and the like agreeable figures, that display themselves to view, whilst every one in the regiment holds a picture in her hand.

“Upon my giving the word to *discharge their fans*,

they give one general crack that may be heard at a considerable distance when the wind sits fair. This is one of the most difficult parts of the exercise ; but I have several ladies with me, who at their first entrance could not give a pop loud enough to be heard at the further end of a room, who can now *discharge a fan* in such a manner, that it shall make a report like a pocket-pistol. I have likewise taken care (in order to hinder young women from letting off their fans in wrong places or unsuitable occasions) to show upon what subject the crack of a fan may come in properly : I have likewise invented a fan, with which a girl of sixteen, by the help of a little wind which is enclosed about one of the largest sticks, can make as loud a crack as a woman of fifty with an ordinary fan.

“ When the fans are thus *discharged*, the word of command in course is to *ground their fans*. This teaches a lady to quit her fan gracefully when she throws it aside, in order to take up a pack of cards, adjust a curl of hair, replace a falling pin, or apply herself to any other matter of importance. This part of the exercise, as it only consists in ‘tossing a fan with an air upon a long table (which stands by for that purpose), may be learned in two days’ time as well as in a twelvemonth.

“ When my female regiment is thus *disarmed*, I generally let them walk about the room for some time ; when on a sudden (like ladies that look upon their watches after a long visit) they all of them hasten to their arms, catch them up in a hurry, and place them-

selves in their proper stations upon my calling out *Recover your fans*. This part of the exercise is not difficult, provided a woman applies her thoughts to it.

“The *fluttering of the fan* is the last, and indeed the masterpiece of the whole exercise; but if a lady does not misspend her time, she may make herself mistress of it in three months. I generally lay aside the dog-days and the hot time of the summer for the teaching of this part of the exercise; for as soon as ever I pronounce *Flutter your fans*, the place is filled with so many zephyrs and gentle breezes as are very refreshing in that season of the year, though they might be dangerous to ladies of a tender constitution in any other.

“There is an infinite variety of motions to be made use of in the *flutter of a fan*: there is the angry flutter, the modest flutter, the timorous flutter, the confused flutter, the merry flutter, and the amorous flutter. Not to be tedious, there is scarce any emotion in the mind which does not produce a suitable agitation in the fan; insomuch, that if I only see the fan of a disciplined lady, I know very well whether she laughs, frowns, or blushes. I have seen a fan so very angry, that it would have been dangerous for the absent lover who provoked it to have come within the wind of it; and at other times so very languishing, that I have been glad for the lady's sake the lover was at a sufficient distance from it. I need not add, that a fan is either a prude or coquette, according to the nature of the person who bears it. To conclude my letter, I must



acquaint you that I have from my own observations compiled a little treatise for the use of my scholars, entitled *The Passions of the Fan*; which I will communicate to you, if you think it may be of use to the public. I shall have a general review on Thursday next; to which you shall be very welcome if you will honour it with your presence.—I am, etc.”

“P.S. I teach young gentlemen the whole art of gallanting a fan.

“N.B. I have several little plain fans made for this use, to avoid expense.”

*The Spectator*, No. 102.

Wednesday, June 27, 1711.

## LVIII

### *Pedants*

—*Id arbitrator*

*Adprime in vita esse utile, ne quid nimis.*—TER. *And.*

My friend Will Honeycomb values himself very much upon what he calls the knowledge of mankind, which has cost him many disasters in his youth; for Will reckons every misfortune that he has met with among the women, and every rencounter among the men, as parts of his education, and fancies he should never have been the man he is, had not he broke windows, knocked down constables, disturbed honest people with his midnight serenades, and beat up a lewd woman's quarters, when he was a young fellow. The

engaging in adventures of this nature Will calls the studying of mankind; and terms this knowledge of the town, the knowledge of the world. Will ingenuously confesses, that for half his life his head ached every morning with reading of men overnight; and at present comforts himself under certain pains which he endures from time to time, that without them he could not have been acquainted with the gallantries of the age. This Will looks upon as the learning of a gentleman, and regards all other kinds of science as the accomplishments of one whom he calls a scholar, a bookish man, or a philosopher.

For these reasons Will shines in mixed company, where he has the discretion not to go out of his depth, and has often a certain way of making his real ignorance appear a seeming one. Our club however has frequently caught him tripping, at which times they never spare him. For as Will often insults us with the knowledge of the town, we sometimes take our revenge upon him by our knowledge of books.

He was last week producing two or three letters which he writ in his youth to a coquette lady. The raillery of them was natural, and well enough for a mere man of the town; but, very unluckily, several of the words were wrong spelt. Will laughed this off at first as well as he could; but finding himself pushed on all sides, and especially by the Templar, he told us, with a little passion, that he never liked pedantry in spelling, and that he spelt like a gentleman, and not like a scholar: upon this Will had recourse to his old

other methods of improvement, as it finishes good sense, so it makes a silly man ten thousand times more insufferable, by supplying variety of matter to his impertinence, and giving him an opportunity of abounding in absurdities.

Shallow pedants cry up one another much more than men of solid and useful learning. To read the titles they give an editor or collator of a manuscript, you would take him for the glory of the commonwealth of letters and the wonder of his age; when perhaps upon examination you find that he has only rectified a Greek particle, or laid out a whole sentence in proper commas.

They are obliged indeed to be thus lavish of their praises, that they may keep one another in countenance; and it is no wonder if a great deal of knowledge, which is not capable of making a man wise, has a natural tendency to make him vain and arrogant.

*The Spectator*, No. 105.

Saturday, June 30, 1711

## LIX

### *The Spectator at Coverley Hall*

—*Hinc tibi copia  
Manabit ad plenum, benigno  
Ruris honorum opulenta cornu.*—~~Hinc~~

HAVING often received an invitation from my friend Sir Roger de Coverley to pass away a month with him in the country, I last week accompanied him thither,

and am settled with him for some time at his country-house, where I intend to form several of my ensuing speculations. Sir Roger, who is very well acquainted with my humour, lets me rise and go to bed when I please, dine at his own table or in my chamber as I think fit, sit still and say nothing without bidding me be merry. When the gentlemen of the country come to see him, he only shows me at a distance : as I have been walking in his fields, I have observed them stealing a sight of me over an hedge, and have heard the knight desiring them not to let me see them, for that I hated to be stared at.

I am the more at ease in Sir Roger's family, because it consists of sober and staid persons ; for as the knight is the best master in the world, he seldom changes his servants ; and as he is beloved by all about him, his servants never care for leaving him ; by this means his domestics are all in years, and grown old with their master. You would take his valet de chambre for his brother, his butler is grey-headed, his groom is one of the gravest men that I have ever seen, and his coachman has the looks of a privy-councillor. You see the goodness of the master even in the old house-dog, and in a grey pad that is kept in the stable with great care and tenderness out of regard to his past services, though he has been useless for several years.

I could not but observe with a great deal of pleasure the joy that appeared in the countenances of these ancient domestics upon my friend's arrival at his country-seat. Some of them could not refrain from

topic of showing the narrow-spiritedness, the pride, and ignorance of pedants; which he carried so far, that upon my retiring to my lodgings, I could not forbear throwing together such reflections as occurred to me upon that subject.

A man who has been brought up among books, and is able to talk of nothing else, is a very indifferent companion, and what we call a pedant. But, methinks, we should enlarge the title, and give it every one that does not know how to think out of his profession and particular way of life.

What is a greater pedant than a mere man of the town? Bar him the play-houses, a catalogue of the reigning Beauties, and an account of a few fashionable distempers that have befallen him, and you strike him dumb. How many a pretty gentleman's knowledge lies all within the verge of the court? He will tell you the names of the principal favourites, repeat the shrewd sayings of a man of quality, whisper an intrigue that is not yet blown upon by common fame; or, if the sphere of his observations is a little larger than ordinary, will perhaps enter into all the incidents, turns, and revolutions in a game of ombre. When he has gone thus far, he has shown you the whole circle of his accomplishments, his parts are drained, and he is disabled from any further conversation. What are these but rank pedants? and yet these are the men who value themselves most on their exemption from the pedantry of colleges.

I might here mention the military pedant, who

always talks in a camp, and is storming towns, making lodgments, and fighting battles from one end of the year to the other. Everything he speaks smells of gunpowder; if you take away his artillery from him, he has not a word to say for himself. I might likewise mention the law pedant, that is perpetually putting cases, repeating the transactions of Westminster Hall, wrangling with you upon the most indifferent circumstances of life, and not to be convinced of the distance of a place, or of the most trivial point in conversation, but by dint of argument. The state-pedant is wrapt up in news, and lost in politics. If you mention either of the kings of Spain or Poland, he talks very notably; but if you go out of the *Gazette*, you drop him. In short, a mere courtier, a mere soldier, a mere scholar, a mere anything, is an insipid pedantic character, and equally ridiculous.

Of all the species of pedants, which I have mentioned, the book-pedant is much the most supportable; he has at least an exercised understanding, and a head which is full though confused; so that a man who converses with him may often receive from him hints of things that are worth knowing, and what he may possibly turn to his own advantage, though they are of little use to the owner. The worst kind of pedants among learned men, are such as are naturally endued with a very small share of common sense, and have read a great number of books without taste or distinction.

The truth of it is, learning, like travelling and all

other methods of improvement, as it finishes good sense, so it makes a silly man ten thousand times more insufferable, by supplying variety of matter to his impertinence, and giving him an opportunity of abounding in absurdities.

Shallow pedants cry up one another much more than men of solid and useful learning. To read the titles they give an editor or collator of a manuscript, you would take him for the glory of the commonwealth of letters and the wonder of his age; when perhaps upon examination you find that he has only rectified a Greek particle, or laid out a whole sentence in proper commas.


They are obliged indeed to be thus lavish of their praises, that they may keep one another in countenance; and it is no wonder if a great deal of knowledge, which is not capable of making a man wise, has a natural tendency to make him vain and arrogant.

*The Spectator*, No. 105.

Saturday, June 30, 1711

## LIX

### *The Spectator at Coverley Hall*

—*Hinc tibi copia  
Manabit ad plenum, benigno  
Ruris hororum opulenta cornu.*—H. 

HAVING often received an invitation from my friend Sir Roger de Coverley to pass away a month with him in the country, I last week accompanied him thither,

and am settled with him for some time at his country-house, where I intend to form several of my ensuing speculations. Sir Roger, who is very well acquainted with my humour, lets me rise and go to bed when I please, dine at his own table or in my chamber as I think fit, sit still and say nothing without bidding me be merry. When the gentlemen of the country come to see him, he only shows me at a distance : as I have been walking in his fields, I have observed them stealing a sight of me over an hedge, and have heard the knight desiring them not to let me see them, for that I hated to be stared at.

I am the more at ease in Sir Roger's family, because it consists of sober and staid persons ; for as the knight is the best master in the world, he seldom changes his servants ; and as he is beloved by all about him, his servants never care for leaving him ; by this means his domestics are all in years, and grown old with their master. You would take his valet de chambre for his brother, his butler is grey-headed, his groom is one of the gravest men that I have ever seen, and his coachman has the looks of a privy-councillor. You see the goodness of the master even in the old house-dog, and in a grey pad that is kept in the stable with great care and tenderness out of regard to his past services, though he has been useless for several years.

I could not but observe with a great deal of pleasure the joy that appeared in the countenances of these ancient domestics upon my friend's arrival at his country-seat. Some of them could not refrain from



tears at the sight of their old master ; every one of them pressed forward to do something for him, and seemed discouraged if they were not employed. At the same time the good old knight, with a mixture of the father and the master of the family, tempered the inquiries after his own affairs with several kind questions relating to themselves. This humanity and good nature engages everybody to him, so that when he is pleasant upon any of them, all his family are in good humo'ir, and none so much as the person whom he diverts himself with : on the contrary, if he coughs, or betrays any infirmity of old age, it is easy for a stander-by to observe a secret concern in the looks of all his servants.

My worthy friend has put me under the particular care of his butler, who is a very prudent man, and, as well as the rest of his fellow-servants, wonderfully desirous of pleasing me, because they have often heard their master talk of me as of his particular friend.

My chief companion, when Sir Roger is diverting himself in the woods or the fields, is a very venerable man who is ever with Sir Roger, and has lived at his house in the nature of a chaplain above thirty years. This gentleman is a person of good sense and some learning, of a very regular life and obliging conversation : he heartily loves Sir Roger, and knows that he is very much in the old knight's esteem, so that he lives in the family rather as a relation than a dependent.

I have observed in several of my papers, that my friend Sir Roger, amidst all his good qualities, is

something of an humourist ; and that his virtues, as well as imperfections, are as it were tinged by a certain extravagance, which makes them particularly his, and distinguishes them from those of other men. This cast of mind, as it is generally very innocent in itself, so it renders his conversation highly agreeable, and more delightful than the same degree of sense and virtue would appear in their common and ordinary colours. As I was walking with him last night, he asked me how I liked the good man whom I have just now mentioned ? and without staying for my answer told me, that he was afraid of being insulted with Latin and Greek at his own table ; for which reason he desired a particular friend of his at the University to find him out a clergyman rather of plain sense than much learning, of a good aspect, a clear voice, a sociable temper, and, if possible, a man that understood a little of backgammon. “My friend,” says Sir Roger, “found me out this gentleman, who, besides the endowments required of him, is, they tell me, a good scholar, though he does not show it. I have given him the parsonage of the parish ; and because I know his value, have settled upon him a good annuity for life. If he outlives me, he shall find that he was higher in my esteem than perhaps he thinks he is. • He has now been with me thirty years, and though he does not know I have taken notice of it, has never in all that time asked anything of me for himself, though he is every day soliciting me for something in behalf of one or other of my tenants, his parishioners. There has not been a

lawsuit in the parish since he has lived among them : if any dispute arises, they apply themselves to him for the decision ; if they do not acquiesce in his judgment, which I think never happened above once or twice at most, they appeal to me. At his first settling with me, I made him a present of all the good sermons which have been printed in English, and only begged of him that every Sunday he would pronounce one of them in the pulpit. Accordingly, he has digested them into such a series, that they follow one another naturally, and make a continued system of practical divinity."

As Sir Roger was going on in his story, the gentleman we were talking of came up to us ; and upon the knight's asking him who preached to-morrow (for it was Saturday night), told us, the Bishop of St. Asaph in the morning, and Dr. South in the afternoon. He then showed us his list of preachers for the whole year, where I saw with a great deal of pleasure Archbishop Tillotson, Bishop Saunderson, Doctor Barrow, Doctor Calamy, with several living authors who have published discourses of practical divinity. I no sooner saw this venerable man in the pulpit, but I very much approved of my friend's insisting upon the qualifications of a good aspect and a clear voice ; for I was so charmed with the gracefulness of his figure and delivery, as well as with the discourses he pronounced, that I ~~was~~ I never passed any time more to my satisfaction. A sermon repeated after this manner, is like the composition of a poet in the mouth of a graceful actor.

I could heartily wish that more of our country clergy

would follow this example ; and instead of wasting their spirits in laborious compositions of their own, would endeavour after a handsome elocution, and all those other talents that are proper to enforce what has been penned by greater masters. This would not only be more easy to themselves, but more edifying to the people.

*The Spectator*, No. 106.

Monday, July 2, 1711.

## LX

### *Will Wimble*

*Gratis anhelans, multa agendo nihil agens* — PHAEDR.

As I was yesterday morning walking with Sir Roger before his house, a country fellow brought him a huge fish, which, he told him, Mr. William Wimble had caught that very morning ; and that he presented it, with his service to him, and intended to come and dine with him. At the same time he delivered a letter, which my friend read to me as soon as the messenger left him.

“SIR ROGER—I desire you to accept of a jack, which is the best I have caught this season. I intend to come and stay with you a week, and see how the perch bite in the Black River. I observed with some concern, the last time I saw you upon the bowling-green, that your whip wanted a lash to it ; I will bring half a dozen with me that I twisted last week, which I

hope will serve you all the time you are in the country. I have not been out of the saddle for six days last past, having been at Eaton with Sir John's eldest son. He takes to his learning hugely.—I am, Sir, your humble Servant, WILL WIMBLE."

This extraordinary letter, and message that accompanied it, made me very curious to know the character and quality of the gentleman who sent them ; which I found to be as follows. Will Wimble is younger brother to a baronet, and descended of the ancient family of the Wimbles. He is now between forty and fifty ; but being bred to no business and born to no estate, he generally lives with his elder brother as superintendent of his game. He hunts a pack of dogs better than any man in the country, and is very famous for finding out a hare. He is extremely well versed in all the little handicrafts of an idle man : he makes a May-fly to a miracle ; and furnishes the whole country with angle-rods. As he is a good-natured officious fellow, and very much esteemed upon account of his family, he is a welcome guest at every house, and keeps up a good correspondence among all the gentlemen about him. He carries a tulip-root in his pocket from one to another, or exchanges a puppy between a couple of friends that live perhaps in the opposite sides of the county. Will is a particular favourite of all the young heirs, whom he frequently obliges with a net that he has weaved, or a setting-dog that he has made himself. He now and then presents a pair of garters, of his own

knitting to their mothers or sisters ; and raises a great deal of mirth among them, by inquiring as often as he meets them, how they wear ? These gentleman-like manufactures and obliging little humours make Will the darling of the country.

Sir Roger was proceeding in the character of him, when he saw him make up to us with two or three hazel-twigs in his hand that he had cut in Sir Roger's woods, as he came through them in his way to the house. I was very much pleased to observe on one side the hearty and sincere welcome, with which Sir Roger received him, and on the other, the secret joy which his guest discovered at sight of the good old knight. After the first salutes were over, Will desired Sir Roger to lend him one of his servants to carry a set of shuttle-cocks he had with him in a little box to a lady that lived about a mile off, to whom it seems he had promised such a present for above this half year. Sir Roger's back was no sooner turned but honest Will began to tell me of a large cock pheasant that he had sprung in one of the neighbouring woods, with two or three other adventures of the same nature. Odd and uncommon characters are the game that I look for, and most delight in ; for which reason I was as much pleased with the novelty of the person that talked to me, as he could be for his life with the springing of a pheasant, and therefore listened to him with more than ordinary attention.

In the midst of his discourse the bell rung to dinner, where the gentleman I have been speaking of had the

pleasure of seeing the huge jack he had caught, served up for the first dish in a most sumptuous manner. Upon our sitting down to it, he gave us a long account how he had hooked it, played with it, foiled it, and at length drew it out upon the bank, with several other particulars that lasted all the first course. A dish of wild fowl that came afterwards furnished conversation for the rest of the dinner, which concluded with a late invention of Will's for improving the quail-pipe.

Upon withdrawing into my room after dinner, I was secretly touched with compassion towards the honest gentleman that had dined with us ; and could not but consider with a great deal of concern, how so good an heart and such busy hands were wholly employed in trifles ; that so much humanity should be so little beneficial to others, and so much industry so little advantageous to himself. The same temper of mind and application to affairs might have recommended him to the public esteem, and have raised his fortune in another station of life. What good to his country or himself might not a trader or merchant have done with such useful though ordinary qualifications ?

Will Wimble's is the case of many a younger brother of a great family, who had rather see their children starve like gentlemen, than thrive in a trade or profession that is beneath their quality. This humour fills several parts of Europe with pride and beggary. It is the happiness of a trading nation like ours, that the younger sons, though incapable of any liberal art or

profession, may be placed in such a way of life, as may perhaps enable them to vie with the best of their family: accordingly we find several citizens that were launched into the world with narrow fortunes, rising by an honest industry to greater estates than those of their elder brothers. It is not improbable but Will was formerly tried at divinity, law, or physic; and that finding his genius did not lie that way, his parents gave him up at length to his own inventions. But certainly, however improper he might have been for studies of a higher nature, he was perfectly well turned for the occupations of trade and commerce. As I think this is a point which cannot be too much inculcated, I shall desire my reader to compare what I have here written with what I have said in my twenty-first speculation.

*The Spectator*, No. 108.

Wednesday, July 4, 1711.

## LXI

### *The Haunted Walk*

*Horror ubique animos, simul ipsa silentia terrent.*—VIRG.

AT a little distance from Sir Roger's house, among the ruins of an old abbey, there is a long walk of aged elms; which are shot up so very high, that when one passes under them, the rooks and crows that rest upon the tops of them seem to be cawing in another region. I am very much delighted with this sort of noise, which I consider as a kind of natural prayer to that Being who



supplies the wants of his whole creation, and whq, in the beautiful language of the Psalms, feedeth the young ravens that call upon him. I like this retirement the better, because of an ill report it lies under of being haunted ; for which reason (as I have been told in the family) no living creature ever walks in it besides the chaplain. My good friend the butler desired me, with a very grave face, not to venture myself in it after sunset, for that one of the footmen had been almost frightened out of his wits by a spirit that appeared to him in the shape of a black horse without an head ; to which he added, that about a month ago one of the maids coming home late that way with a pail of milk upon her head, heard such a rustling among the bushes that she let it fall.

I was taking a walk in this place last night between the hours of nine and ten, and could not but fancy it one of the most proper scenes in the world for a ghost to appear in. The ruins of the abbey are scattered up and down on every side, and half covered with ivy and elder-bushes, the harbours of several solitary birds which seldom make their appearance till the dusk of the evening. The place was formerly a churchyard, and has still several marks in it of graves and burying-places. There is such an echo among the old ruins and vaults, that if you stamp but a little louder than ordinary, you hear the sound repeated. At the same time the walk of elms, with the croaking of the ravens which from time to time are heard from the tops of them, looks exceeding solemn and venerable. These

objects naturally raise seriousness and attention ; and when night heightens the awfulness of the place, and pours out her supernumerary horrors upon everything in it, I do not at all wonder that weak minds fill it with spectres and apparitions.

Mr. Locke, in his chapter of the association of ideas, has very curious remarks to show how, by the prejudice of education, one idea often introduces into the mind a whole set that bear no resemblance to one another in the nature of things. Among several examples of this kind, he produces the following instance. "The ideas of goblins and sprites have really no more to do with darkness than light ; yet let but a foolish maid inculcate these often on the mind of a child, and raise them there together, possibly he shall never be able to separate them again so long as he lives ; but darkness shall ever afterwards bring with it those frightful ideas, and they shall be so joined, that he can no more bear the one than the other."

As I was walking in this solitude, where the dusk of the evening conspired with so many other occasions of terror, I observed a cow grazing not far from me, which an imagination that is apt to startle might easily have construed into a black horse without an head ; and I daresay the poor footman lost his wits upon some such trivial occasion.

My friend Sir Roger has often told me, with a good deal of mirth, that at his first coming to his estate he found three parts of his house altogether useless ; that the best room in it had the reputation of being

haunted, and by that means was locked up ; that noises had been heard in his long gallery, so that he could not get a servant to enter it after eight o'clock at night ; that the door of one of his chambers was nailed up, because there went a story in the family that a butler had formerly hanged himself in it ; and that his mother, who lived to a great age, had shut up half the rooms in the house, in which either her husband, a son, or daughter had died. The knight, seeing his habitation reduced to so small a compass, and himself in a manner shut out of his own house, upon the death of his mother ordered all the apartments to be flung open and exercised by his chaplain, who lay in every room one after another, and by that means dissipated the fears which had so long reigned in the family.

I should not have been thus particular upon these ridiculous horrors, did not I find them so very much prevail in all parts of the country. At the same time I think a person who is thus terrified with the imagination of ghosts and spectres much more reasonable than one who, contrary to the reports of all historians sacred and profane, ancient and modern, and to the traditions of all nations, thinks the appearance of spirits fabulous and groundless : could not I give myself up to this general testimony of mankind, I should to the relations of particular persons who are now living, and whom I cannot distrust in other matters of fact. I might here add, that not only the historians, to whom we may join the poets, but likewise the philosophers of antiquity have favoured this opinion.

Lucretius himself, though by the course of his philosophy he was obliged to maintain that the soul did not exist separate from the body, makes no doubt of the reality of apparitions, and that men have often appeared after their death. This I think very remarkable ; he was so pressed with the matter of fact which he could not have the confidence to deny, that he was forced to account for it by one of the most absurd unphilosophical notions that was ever started. He tells us that the surfaces of all bodies are perpetually flying off from their respective bodies, one after another ; and that these surfaces or thin cases, that included each other whilst they were joined in the body like the coats of an onion, are sometimes seen entire when they are separated from it ; by which means we often behold the shapes and shadows of persons who are either dead or absent.

I shall dismiss this paper with a story out of Josephus, not so much for the sake of the story itself as for the moral reflections with which the author concludes it, and which I shall here set down in his own words. " Glaphyra the daughter of King Archelaus, after the death of her two first husbands (being married to a third, who was brother to her first husband, and so passionately in love with her that he turned off his former wife to make room for this marriage), had a very odd kind of dream. She fancied that she saw her first husband coming towards her, and that she embraced him with great tenderness ; when, in the midst of the pleasure which she expressed at the sight of him, he

reproached her after the following manner · ‘ Glaphyra,’ says he, ‘ thou hast made good the old saying, that women are not to be trusted. Was not I the husband of thy virginity? Have I not children by thee? How couldst thou forget our loves so far as to enter into a second marriage, and after that into a third, nay to take for thy husband a man who has so shamelessly crept into the bed of his brother? However, for the sake of our passed loves, I shall free thee from thy present reproach, and make thee mine for ever.’ Glaphyra told this dream to several women of her acquaintance, and died soon after. I thought this story might not be impertinent in this place, wherein I speak of those kings: besides that, the example deserves to be taken notice of, as it contains a most certain proof of the immortality of the soul, and of divine providence. If any man thinks these facts incredible, let him enjoy his own opinion to himself, but let him not endeavour to disturb the belief of others, who by instances of this nature are excited to the study of virtue.”

*The Spectator*, No. 110.

Friday, July 6, 1711.

## LXII

### *A Country Sunday*

Ἀθανάτους μὲν πρῶτα θεούς, νόμῳ ὡς δίδκεται,

Τίμα—

ΡΥΤΗ.

I AM always very well pleased with a country Sunday ; and think, if keeping holy the seventh day were only

a human institution, it would be the best method that could have been thought of for the polishing and civilizing of mankind. It is certain the country people would soon degenerate into a kind of savages and barbarians, were there not such frequent returns of a stated time, in which the whole village meet together with their best faces, and in their cleanliest habits, to converse with one another upon indifferent subjects, hear their duties explained to them, and join together in adoration of the Supreme Being. Sunday clears away the rust of the whole week, not only as it refreshes in their minds the notions of religion, but as it puts both the sexes upon appearing in their most agreeable forms, and exerting all such qualities as are apt to give them a figure in the eye of the village. A country fellow distinguishes himself as much in the churchyard, as a citizen does upon the 'Change, the whole parish-politics being generally discussed in that place either after sermon or before the bell rings.

My friend Sir Roger, being a good churchman, has beautified the inside of his church with several texts of his own choosing : he has likewise given a handsome pulpit-cloth, and railed in the communion-table at his own expense. He has often told me, that at his coming to his estate he found his parishioners very irregular ; and that in order to make them kneel and join in the responses, he gave every one of them a hassock and a common-prayer book ; and at the same time employed an itinerant singing-master, who goes about the country for that purpose, to instruct them rightly in the tunes

of the psalms ; upon which they now very much value themselves, and indeed outdo most of the country churches that I have ever heard.

As Sir Roger is landlord to the whole congregation, he keeps them in very good order, and will suffer nobody to sleep in it besides himself ; for if by chance he has been surprised into a short nap at sermon, upon recovering out of it he stands up and looks about him, and if he sees anybody else nodding, either wakes them himself, or sends his servant to them. Several other of the old knight's particularities break out upon these occasions : sometimes he will be lengthening out a verse in the singing-psalms half a minute after the rest of the congregation have done with it : sometimes, when he is pleased with the matter of his devotion, he pronounces Amen three or four times to the same prayer ; and sometimes stands up when everybody else is upon their knees, to count the congregation, or see if any of his tenants are missing.

I was yesterday very much surprised to hear my old friend, in the midst of the service, calling out to one John Matthews to mind what he was about, and not disturb the congregation. This John Matthews it seems is remarkable for being an idle fellow, and at that time was kicking his heels for his diversion. This authority of the knight, though exerted in that odd manner which accompanies him in all circumstances of life, has a very good effect upon the parish, who are not polite enough to see anything ridiculous in his behaviour ; besides that the general good sense and

worthiness of his character make his friends observe these little singularities as foils that rather set off than blemish his good qualities.

As soon as the sermon is finished, nobody presumes to stir till Sir Roger is gone out of the church. The knight walks down from his seat in the chancel between a double row of his tenants, that stand bowing to him on each side ; and every now and then inquires how such an one's wife, or mother, or son, or father do, whom he does not see at church ; which is understood as a secret reprimand to the person that is absent.

The chaplain has often told me, that upon a catechizing-day, when Sir Roger has been pleased with a boy that answers well, he has ordered a bible to be given him next day for his encouragement ; and sometimes accompanies it with a fitch of bacon to his mother. Sir Roger has likewise added five pounds a year to the clerk's place ; and that he may encourage the young fellows to make themselves perfect in the church-service, has promised upon the death of the present incumbent, who is very old, to bestow it according to merit.

The fair understanding between Sir Roger and his chaplain, and their mutual concurrence in doing good, is the more remarkable, because the very next village is famous for the differences and contentions that rise between the parson and the 'squire, who live in a perpetual state of war. The parson is always preaching at the 'squire, and the 'squire to be revenged on the parson never comes to church. The 'squire has



made all his tenants atheists and tithe-stealers ; while the parson instructs them every Sunday in the dignity of his order, and insinuates to them in almost every sermon, that he is a better man than his patr<sup>en</sup>. In short, matters are come to such an extremity that the 'squire has not said his prayers either in public or private this half-year ; and that the parson threatens him, if he does not mend his manners, to pray for him in the face of the whole congregation.

Feuds of this nature, though too frequent in the country, are very fatal to the ordinary people ; who are so used to be dazzled with riches, that they pay as much deference to the understanding of a man of an estate, as of a man of learning ; and are very hardly brought to regard any truth, how important soever it may be, that is preached to them, when they know there are several men of five hundred a year who do not believe it.

*The Spectator*, No. 112.

Monday, July 9, 1711.

### LXIII

#### *Bodily Exercise*

—*Ut sit mens sana in corpore sano.*—JUV.

BODILY labour is of two kinds, either that which a man submits to for his livelihood, or that which he undergoes for his pleasure. The latter of them generally changes the name of labour for that of exercise,

but differs only from ordinary labour as it rises from another motive.

A country life abounds in both these kinds of labour, and for that reason gives a man a greater stock of health, and consequently a more perfect enjoyment of himself, than any other way of life. I consider the body as a system of tubes and glands, or to use a more rustic phrase, a bundle of pipes and strainers, fitted to one another after so wonderful a manner as to make a proper engine for the soul to work with. This description does not only comprehend the bowels, bones, tendons, veins, nerves, and arteries, but every muscle and every ligature, which is a composition of fibres, that are so many imperceptible tubes or pipes interwoven on all sides with invisible glands or strainers.

This general idea of a human body, without considering it in its niceties of anatomy, lets us see how absolutely necessary labour is for the right preservation of it. There must be frequent motions and agitations, to mix, digest, and separate the juices contained in it, as well as to clear and cleanse that infinitude of pipes and strainers of which it is composed, and to give their solid parts a more firm and lasting tone. Labour or exercise ferments the humours, casts them into their proper channels, throws off redundancies, and helps nature in those secret distributions, without which the body cannot subsist in its vigour, nor the soul act with cheerfulness.

I might here mention the effects which this has upon all the faculties of the mind, by keeping the

understanding clear, the imagination untroubled, and refining those spirits that are necessary for the proper exertion of our intellectual faculties, during the present laws of union between soul and body. It is to a neglect in this particular that we must ascribe the spleen, which is so frequent in men of studious and sedentary tempers, as well as the vapours to which those of the other sex are so often subject.

Had not exercise been absolutely necessary for our well-being, nature would not have made the body so proper for it, by giving such an activity to the limbs, and such a pliancy to every part as necessarily produce those compressions, extensions, contortions, dilatations, and all other kinds of motions that are necessary for the preservation of such a system of tubes and glands as has been before mentioned. And that we might not want inducements to engage us in such an exercise of the body as is proper for its welfare, it is so ordered that nothing valuable can be procured without it. Not to mention riches and honour, even food and raiment are not to be come at without the toil of the hands and sweat of the brows. Providence furnishes materials, but expects that we should work them up ourselves. The earth must be laboured before it gives its increase, and when it is forced into its several products, how many hands must they pass through before they are fit for use? Manufactures, trade, and agriculture, naturally employ more than nineteen parts of the species in twenty; and as for those who are not obliged to labour, by the condition in which they are

born, they are more miserable than the rest of mankind, unless they indulge themselves in that voluntary labour which goes by the name of exercise.

My friend Sir Roger has been an indefatigable man in business of this kind, and has hung several parts of his house with the trophies of his former labours. The walls of his great hall are covered with the horns of several kinds of deer that he has killed in the chase, which he thinks the most valuable furniture of his house, as they afford him frequent topics of discourse, and show that he has not been idle. At the lower end of the hall is a large otter's skin stuffed with hay, which his mother ordered to be hung up in that manner, and the knight looks upon with great satisfaction, because it seems he was but nine years old when his dog killed him. A little room adjoining to the hall is a kind of arsenal filled with guns of several sizes and inventions, with which the knight has made great havoc in the woods, and destroyed many thousands of pheasants, partridges, and woodcocks. His stable doors are patched with noses that belonged to foxes of the knight's own hunting down. Sir Roger showed me one of them that for distinction's sake has a brass nail struck through it, which cost him about fifteen hours' riding, carried him through half a dozen counties, killed him a brace of geldings, and lost above half his dogs. This the knight looks upon as one of the greatest exploits of his life. The perverse widow, whom I have given some account of, was the death of several foxes; for Sir Roger has told me that in the course of his

amours he patched the western door of his stable. Whenever the widow was cruel, the foxes were sure to pay for it. In proportion as his passion for the widow abated, and old age came on, he left off fox-hunting; but a hare is not yet safe that sits within ten miles of his house.

There is no kind of exercise which I would so recommend to my readers of both sexes as this of riding, as there is none which so much conduces to health, and is every way accommodated to the body, according to the idea which I have given of it. Doctor Sydenham is very lavish in its praises; and if the English reader will see the mechanical effects of it described at length, he may find them in a book published not many years since, under the title of *Medicina Gymnastica*. For my own part, when I am in town, for want of these opportunities, I exercise myself an hour every morning upon a dumb-bell that is placed in a corner of my room, and pleases me the more because it does everything I require of it in the most profound silence. My landlady and her daughters are so well acquainted with my hours of exercise, that they never come into my room to disturb me whilst I am ringing.

When I was some years younger than I am at present, I used to employ myself in a more laborious diversion, which I learned from a Latin treatise of exercises, that is written with great erudition: it is there called the *σκιόμαχία*, or the fighting with a man's own shadow, and consists in the brandishing of two short sticks grasped in each hand, and laden with

plugs of lead at either end. This opens the chest, exercises the limbs, and gives a man all the pleasure of boxing without the blows. I could wish that several learned men would lay out that time which they employ in controversies and disputes about nothing, in this method of fighting with their own shadows. It might conduce very much to evaporate the spleen, which makes them uneasy to the public as well as to themselves.

To conclude, as I am a compound of soul and body, I consider myself as obliged to a double scheme of duties; and I think I have not fulfilled the business of the day, when I do not thus employ the one in labour and exercise, as well as the other in study and contemplation.

*The Spectator*, No. 115.

Thursday, July 12, 1711.

## LXIV

### *A Visit to a Witch*

—*Ipsi sibi somnia fingunt.*—VIRG.

THERE are some opinions in which a man should stand neuter, without engaging his assent to one side or the other. Such a hovering faith as this, which refuses to settle upon any determination, is absolutely necessary in a mind that is careful to avoid errors and prepossessions. When the arguments press equally on both sides in matters that are indifferent to us, the safest method is to give up ourselves to neither.

It is with this temper of mind that I consider the subject of witchcraft. When I hear the relations that are made from all parts of the world, not only from Norway and Lapland, from the East and West Indies, but from every particular nation in Europe, I cannot forbear thinking that there is such an intercourse and commerce with evil spirits, as that which we express by the name of witchcraft. But when I consider that the ignorant and credulous parts of the world abound most in these relations, and that the persons among us who are supposed to engage in such an infernal commerce are people of a weak understanding and crazed imagination, and at the same time reflect upon the many impostures and delusions of this nature that have been detected in all ages, I endeavour to suspend my belief till I hear more certain accounts than any which have yet come to my knowledge. In short, when I consider the question, whether there are such persons in the world as those we call witches? my mind is divided between the two opposite opinions; or rather (to speak my thoughts freely) I believe in general that there is and has been such a thing as witchcraft, but at the same time can give no credit to any particular instance of it.

I am engaged in this speculation by some occurrences that I met with yesterday, which I shall give my reader an account of at large. As I was walking with my friend Sir Roger by the side of one of his woods, an old woman applied herself to me for my charity. Her

dress and figure put me in mind of the following description in Otway :

In a close lane, as I pursued my journey,  
I spied a wrinkled hag, with age grown double,  
Picking dry sticks, and mumbling to herself.  
Her eyes with scalding rheum were galled and red ;  
Cold palsy shook her head ; her hands seemed withered ;  
And on her crooked shoulders had she wrapped  
The tattered remnants of an old striped hanging,  
Which served to keep her carcass from the cold :  
So there was nothing of a piece about her.  
Her lower weeds were all o'er coarsely patched  
With different coloured rags, black, red, white, yellow,  
And seemed to speak variety of wretchedness.

As I was musing on this description, and comparing it with the object before me, the knight told me, that this very old woman had the reputation of a witch all over the country, that her lips were observed to be always in motion, and that there was not a switch about her house which her neighbours did not believe had carried her several hundreds of miles. If she chanced to stumble, they always found sticks or straws that lay in the figure of a cross before her. If she made any mistake at church, and cried *Amen* in a wrong place, they never failed to conclude that she was saying her prayers backwards. There was not a maid in the parish that would take a pin of her, though she should offer a bag of money with it. She goes by the name of Moll White, and has made the country ring with several imaginary exploits which are palmed upon her. If the dairymaid does not make her butter come, so soon as she would have it, Moll White is at the



bottom of the churn. If a horse sweats in the stable, Moll White has been upon his back. If a hare makes an unexpected escape from the hounds, the huntsman curses Moll White. Nay (says Sir Roger), 'I have known the master of the pack, upon such an occasion, send one of his servants to see if Moll White had been out that morning.

This account raised my curiosity so far, that I begged my friend Sir Roger to go with me into her hovel, which stood in a solitary corner under the side of the wood. Upon our first entering, Sir Roger winked to me, and pointed at something that stood behind the door, which, upon looking that way, I found to be an old broom-staff. At the same time he whispered me in the ear to take notice of a tabby cat that sat in the chimney-corner, which, as the knight told me, lay under as bad a report as Moll White herself; for besides that Moll is said often to accompany her in the same shape, the cat is reported to have spoken twice or thrice in her life, and to have played several pranks above the capacity of an ordinary cat.

I was secretly concerned to see human nature in so much wretchedness and disgrace, but at the same time could not forbear smiling to hear Sir Roger, who is a little puzzled about the old woman, advising her as a justice of peace to avoid all communication with the devil, and never to hurt any of her neighbours' cattle. We concluded our visit with a bounty, which was very acceptable.

In our return home Sir Roger told me, that old Moll had been often brought before him for making children spit pins, and giving maids the nightmare ; and that the country people would be tossing her into a pond and trying experiments with her every day, if it was not for him and his chaplain.

I have since found, upon inquiry, that Sir Roger was several times staggered with the reports that had been brought him concerning this old woman, and would frequently have bound her over to the county sessions, had not his chaplain with much ado persuaded him to the contrary.

I have been the more particular in this account, because I hear there is scarce a village in England that has not a Moll White in it. When an old woman begins to dote and grow chargeable to a parish, she is generally turned into a witch, and fills the whole country with extravagant fancies, imaginary distempers, and terrifying dreams. In the meantime, the poor wretch that is the innocent occasion of so many evils begins to be frighted at herself, and sometimes confesses secret commerce and familiarities that her imagination forms in a delirious old age. This frequently cuts off charity from the greatest objects of compassion, and inspires people with a malevolence towards those poor decrepit parts of our species, in whom human nature is defaced by infirmity and dotage.

## LXV

*Rural Politeness*

*Urbem quam dicunt Romam, Meliboec, putavi  
Stultus ego huic nostrae similem—* VIRG.

THE first and most obvious reflections which arise in a man who changes the city for the country, are upon the different manners of the people whom he meets with in those two different scenes of life. By manners I do not mean morals, but behaviour and good breeding, as they show themselves in the town and in the country.

And here, in the first place, I must observe a very great revolution that has happened in this article of good breeding. Several obliging deferences, condescensions and submissions, with many outward forms and ceremonies that accompany them, were first of all brought up among the politer part of mankind, who lived in courts and cities, and distinguished themselves from the rustic part of the species (who on all occasions acted bluntly and naturally) by such a mutual complaisance and intercourse of civilities. These forms of conversation by degrees multiplied and grew troublesome ; the modish world found too great a constraint in them, and have therefore thrown most of them aside. Conversation, like the Romish religion, was so encumbered with show and ceremony, that it stood in need of a reformation to retrench its superfluities, and restore it to its natural good sense and beauty. At present

therefore an unconstrained carriage, and a certain openness of behaviour, are the height of good breeding. The fashionable world is grown free and easy ; Our manners sit more loose upon us : nothing is so modish as an agreeable negligence. In a word, good breeding shows itself most, where to an ordinary eye it appears the least.

If after this we look on the people of mode in the country, we find in them the manners of the last age. They have no sooner fetched themselves up to the fashion of the polite world, but the town has dropped them, and are nearer to the first state of nature than to those refinements which formerly reigned in the court, and still prevail in the country. One may now know a man that never conversed in the world, by his excess of good breeding. A polite country squire shall make you as many bows in half an hour, as would serve a courtier for a week. There is infinitely more to do about place and precedence in a meeting of justices' wives, than in an assembly of duchesses.

This rural politeness is very troublesome to a man of my temper, who generally take the chair that is next me, and walk first or last, in the front or in the rear, as chance directs. I have known my friend Sir Roger's dinner almost cold before the company could adjust the ceremonial, and be prevailed upon to sit down ; and have heartily pitied my old friend, when I have seen him forced to pick and cull his guests, as they sat at the several parts of his table, that he might drink their healths according to their respective ranks and

qualities. ' Honest Will Wimble, who I should have thought had been altogether uninfected with ceremony, gives me abundance of trouble in this particular. Though he has been fishing all the morning, he will not help himself at dinner till I am served. When we are going out of the hall, he runs behind me ; and last night, as we were walking in the fields, stopped short at a stile till I came up to it, and upon my making signs to him to get over, told me, with a serious smile, that sure I believed they had no manners in the country.

There has happened another revolution in the point of good breeding, which relates to the conversation among men of mode, and which I cannot but look upon as very extraordinary. It was certainly one of the first distinctions of a well-bred man, to express everything that had the most remote appearance of being obscene, in modest terms and distant phrases ; whilst the clown, who had no such delicacy of conception and expression, clothed his ideas in those plain homely terms that are the most obvious and natural. This kind of good manners was perhaps carried to an excess, so as to make conversation too stiff, formal, and precise ; for which reason (as hypocrisy in one age is generally succeeded by atheism in another) conversation is in a great measure relapsed into the first extreme ; so that at present several of our men of the town, and particularly those who have been polished in France, make use of the most coarse uncivilized words in our language, and utter themselves often in such a manner as a clown would blush to hear.

This infamous piece of good breeding, which reigns among the coxcombs of the town, has not yet made its way into the country ; and as it is impossible for such an irrational way of conversation to last long among a people that makes any profession of religion or show of modesty, if the country gentlemen get into it they will certainly be left in the lurch. Their good-breeding will come too late to them, and they will be thought a parcel of lewd clowns, while they fancy themselves talking together like men of wit and pleasure.

As the two points of good breeding, which I have hitherto insisted upon, regard behaviour and conversation, there is a third which turns upon dress. In this too the country are very much behindhand. The rural beaux are not yet got out of the fashion that took place at the time of the Revolution, but ride about the country in red coats and laced hats, while the women in many parts are still trying to outvie one another in the height of their head-dresses.

But a friend of mine, who is now upon the western circuit, having promised to give me an account of the several modes and fashions that prevail in the different parts of the nation through which he passes, I shall defer the enlarging upon this last topic till I have received a letter from him, which I expect every post.

## LXVI

*At the County Assizes*

*Comes jucundus in via pro vehiculo est.*—PUB. SYR. *Frag.*

A MAN'S first care should be to avoid the reproaches of his own heart ; his next, to escape the censures of the world : if the last interferes with the former, it ought to be entirely neglected ; but otherwise there cannot be a greater satisfaction to an honest mind, than to see those approbations which it gives itself seconded by the applauses of the public : a man is more sure of his conduct, when the verdict which he passes upon his own behaviour is thus warranted and confirmed by the opinion of all that know him.

My worthy friend Sir Roger is one of those who is not only at peace within himself, but beloved and esteemed by all about him. He receives a suitable tribute for his universal benevolence to mankind, in the returns of affection and good-will, which are paid him by every one that lives within his neighbourhood. I lately met with two or three odd instances of that general respect which is shown to the good old knight. He would needs carry Will Wimble and myself with him to the county assizes : as we were upon the road, Will Wimble joined a couple of plain men who rid before us, and conversed with them for some time ; during which my friend Sir Roger acquainted me with their characters.

"The first of them," says he, "that has a spaniel by his side, is a yeoman of about an hundred pounds a year, an honest man : he is just within the Game Act, and qualified to kill an hare or a pheasant : he knocks down a dinner with his gun twice or thrice a week ; and by that means lives much cheaper than those who have not so good an estate as himself. He would be a good neighbour if he did not destroy so many partridges : in short, he is a very sensible man ; shoots flying ; and has been several times foreman of the petty-jury.

"The other that rides along with him is Tom Touchy, a fellow famous for taking the law of everybody. There is not one in the town where he lives that he has not sued at a quarter-sessions. The rogue had once the impudence to go to law with the widow. His head is full of costs, damages, and ejectments : he plagued a couple of honest gentlemen so long for a trespass in breaking one of his hedges, till he was forced to sell the ground it enclosed to defray the charges of the prosecution. His father left him fourscore pounds a year ; but he has cast and been cast so often, that he is not now worth thirty. I suppose he is going upon the old business of the willow-tree."

As Sir Roger was giving me this account of Tom Touchy, Will Wimble and his two companions stopped short till we came up to them. After having paid their respects to Sir Roger, Will told him that Mr. Touchy and he must appeal to him upon a dispute that arose between them. Will, it seems, had been giving his fellow-traveller an account of his angling one day in



such a hole ; when Tom Touchy, instead of hearing out his story, told him that Mr. Such an one, if he pleased, might take the law of him for fishing in that part of the river. My friend Sir Roger heard them both, upon a round trot ; and after having paused some time told them, with an air of a man who would not give his judgment rashly, that much might be said on both sides. They were neither of them dissatisfied with the knight's determination, because neither of them found himself in the wrong by it : upon which we made the best of our way to the assizes.

The court was sat before Sir Roger came ; but notwithstanding all the justices had taken their places upon the bench, they made room for the old knight at the head of them ; who, for his reputation in the country, took occasion to whisper in the judge's ear, that he was glad his lordship had met with so much good weather in his circuit. I was listening to the proceedings of the court with much attention, and infinitely pleased with that great appearance and solemnity which so properly accompanies such a public administration of our laws ; when, after about an hour's sitting, I observed to my great surprise, in the midst of a trial, that my friend Sir Roger was getting up to speak. I was in some pain for him, till I found he had acquitted himself of two or three sentences, with a look of much business and great intrepidity.

Upon his first rising the court was hushed, and a general whisper ran among the country people that Sir Roger was up. The speech he made was so little to

the purpose, that I shall not trouble my readers with an account of it ; and I believe was not so much designed by the knight himself to inform the court, as to give him a figure in my eye, and keep up his credit in the country.

I was highly delighted, when the court rose, to see the gentlemen of the country gathering about my old friend, and striving who should compliment him most ; at the same time that the ordinary people gazed upon him at a distance, not a little admiring his courage, that was not afraid to speak to the judge.

In our return home we met with a very odd accident ; which I cannot forbear relating, because it shows how desirous all who know Sir Roger are of giving him marks of their esteem. When we were arrived upon the verge of his estate, we stopped at a little inn to rest ourselves and our horses. The man of the house had, it seems, been formerly a servant in the knight's family ; and to do honour to his old master, had some time since, unknown to Sir Roger, put him up in a sign-post before the door ; so that the *Knight's Head* had hung out upon the road about a week before he himself knew anything of the matter. As soon as Sir Roger was acquainted with it, finding that his servant's indiscretion proceeded wholly from affection and goodwill, he only told him that he had made him too high a compliment ; and when the fellow seemed to think that could hardly be, added with a more decisive look, that it was too great an honour for any man under a duke ; but told him at the same time, that it might,

be altered with a very few touches, and that he himself would be at the charge of it. Accordingly they got a painter by the knight's directions to add a pair of whiskers to the face, and by a little aggravation of the features to change it into the *Saracen's Head*. I should not have known this story, had not the inn-keeper, upon Sir Roger's alighting, told him in my hearing, that his honour's head was brought back last night with the alterations that he had ordered to be made in it. Upon this my friend with his usual cheerfulness related the particulars above-mentioned, and ordered the head to be brought into the room. I could not forbear discovering greater expressions of mirth than ordinary upon the appearance of this monstrous face, under which, notwithstanding, it was made to frown and stare in a most extraordinary manner, I could still discover a distant resemblance of my old friend. Sir Roger, upon seeing me laugh, desired me to tell him truly if I thought it possible for people to know him in that disguise. I at first kept my usual silence; but upon the knight's conjuring me to tell him whether it was not still more like himself than a Saracen, I composed my countenance in the best manner I could, and replied, "That much might be said on both sides."

These several adventures, with the knight's behaviour in them, gave me as pleasant a day as ever I met with in any of my travels.

*The Spectator*, No. 122.

Friday, July 20, 1711.

## LXVII

*On Essay-writing*

Μέγα βιβλίον, μέγα κακόν.

A MAN who publishes his works in a volume, has an infinite advantage over one who communicates his writings to the world in loose tracts and single pieces. We do not expect to meet with anything in a bulky volume, till after some heavy preamble, and several words of course, to prepare the reader for what follows : nay, authors have established it as a kind of rule, that a man ought to be dull sometimes ; as the most severe reader makes allowances for many rests and nodding-places in a voluminous writer. This gave occasion to the famous Greek proverb which I have chosen for my motto, *that a great book is a great evil*.

On the contrary, those who publish their thoughts in distinct sheets, and as it were by piecemeal, have none of these advantages. We must immediately fall into our subject, and treat every part of it in a lively manner, or our papers are thrown by as dull and insipid : our matter must lie close together, and either be wholly new in itself, or in the turn it receives from our expressions. Were the books of our best authors thus to be retailed to the public, and every page submitted to the taste of forty or fifty thousand readers, I am afraid we should complain of many flat expressions, trivial observations, beaten topics, and

common thoughts, which go off very well in the lump. At the same time, notwithstanding some papers may be made up of broken hints and irregular sketches, it is often expected that every sheet should be a kind of treatise, and make out in thought what it wants in bulk; that a point of humour should be worked up in all its parts; and a subject touched upon in its most essential articles, without the repetitions, tautologies, and enlargements, that are indulged to longer labours. The ordinary writers of morality prescribe to their readers after the Galenic way; their medicines are made up in large quantities. An essay-writer must practise in the chymical method, and give the virtue of a full draught in a few drops. Were all books reduced thus to their quintessence, many a bulky author would make his appearance in a penny paper: there would be scarce such a thing in nature as a folio: the works of an age would be contained on a few shelves; not to mention millions of volumes that would be utterly annihilated.

I cannot think that the difficulty of furnishing out separate papers of this nature, has hindered authors from communicating their thoughts to the world after such a manner: though I must confess I am amazed that the press should be only made use of in this way by news-writers and the zealots of parties; as if it were not more advantageous to mankind to be instructed in wisdom and virtue than in politics; and to be made good fathers, husbands, and sons, than counsellors and statesmen. Had the philosophers and

great men of antiquity, who took so much pains in order to instruct mankind, and leave the world wiser and better than they found it ; had they, I say, been possessed of the art of printing, there is no question but they would have made such an advantage of it, in dealing out their lectures to the public. Our common prints would be of great use, were they thus calculated to diffuse good sense through the bulk of a people, to clear up their understandings, animate their minds with virtue, dissipate the sorrows of a heavy heart, or unbend the mind from its more severe employments with innocent amusements. When knowledge, instead of being bound up in books and kept in libraries and retirements, is thus obtruded upon the public ; when it is canvassed in every assembly, and exposed upon every table ; I cannot forbear reflecting upon that passage in the Proverbs, " Wisdom crieth without ; she uttereth her voice in the streets ; she crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates : in the city she uttereth her words, saying, How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity ? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge ? "

The many letters which come to me from persons of the best sense in both sexes (for I may pronounce their characters from their way of writing) do not a little encourage me in the prosecution of this my undertaking : besides that my bookseller tells me, the demand for these my papers increases daily. It is at his instance that I shall continue my rural speculations to the end of this month ; several having made up

separate <sup>s</sup>ts of them. as they have done before of those relating to wit, to operas, to points of morality, or subjects of humour.

I am not at all mortified, when sometimes I see my works thrown aside by men of no taste nor learning. There is a kind of heaviness and ignorance that hangs upon the minds of ordinary men, which is too thick for knowledge to break through; their souls are not to be enlightened,

—*Nox atra cava circumvolat umbra.*

To these I must apply the fable of the mole, that after having consulted many oculists for the bettering of his sight, was at last provided with a good pair of spectacles; but upon his endeavouring to make use of them, his mother told him very prudently, “That spectacles, though they might help the eye of a man, could be of no use to a mole.” It is not therefore for the benefit of moles that I publish these my daily essays.

But besides such <sup>as</sup> are moles through ignorance, there are others who are moles through envy. As it is said in the Latin proverb, “That one man is a wolf to another”; so, generally speaking, one author is a mole to another author. It is impossible for them to discover beauties in one another’s works; they have eyes only for spots and blemishes: they can indeed see the light, as it is said of the animals which are their namesakes, but the idea of it is painful to them; they immediately shut their eyes upon it, and withdraw

themselves into a wilful obscurity. I have already caught two or three of these dark undermining vermin, and intend to make a string of them, in order to hang them up in one of my papers, as an example to all such voluntary moles.

*The Spectator*, No. 124.

Monday, July 23, 1711.

## LXVIII

### *Party Rancour*

*Ne pueri, ne tanta animis assuescite bella :  
Ne patriæ validas in viscera vertite vires.*—VIRG.

MY worthy friend Sir Roger, when we are talking of the malice of parties, very frequently tells us an accident that happened to him when he was a schoolboy, which was at a time when the feuds ran high between the Roundheads and Cavaliers. This worthy knight, being then but a stripling, had occasion to inquire which was the way to St. Anne's Lane, upon which the person whom he spoke to, instead of answering his question, called him a young popish cur, and asked him who had made Anne a saint? The boy, being in some confusion, inquired of the next he met, which was the way to Anne's Lane; but was called a prick-eared cur for his pains, and instead of being shown the way, was told that she had been a saint before he was born, and would be one after he was hanged. Upon this, says Sir Roger, I did not think fit to repeat the former question, but going into every lane of the neighbour-



hood, asked what they called the name of that lane. By which ingenious artifice he found out the place he inquired after, without giving offence to any party. Sir Roger generally closes this narrative with reflections on the mischief that parties do in the country; how they spoil good neighbourhood, and make honest gentlemen hate one another; besides that they manifestly tend to the prejudice of the land-tax, and the destruction of the game.

There cannot a greater judgment befall a country than such a dreadful spirit of division as rends a government into two distinct people, and makes them greater strangers and more averse to one another, than if they were actually two different nations. The effects of such a division are pernicious to the last degree, not only with regard to those advantages which they give the common enemy, but to those private evils which they produce in the heart of almost every particular person. This influence is very fatal both to men's morals and their understandings; it sinks the virtue of a nation, and not only so, but destroys even common sense.

A furious party-spirit, when it rages in its full violence, exerts itself in civil war and bloodshed; and when it is under its greatest restraints, naturally breaks out in falsehood, detraction, calumny, and a partial administration of justice. In a word, it fills a nation with spleen and rancour, and extinguishes all the seeds of good nature, compassion, and humanity. †

Plutarch says very finely, that a man should not

allow himself to hate even his enemies, because, says he, "if you indulge this passion in some occasions, it will rise of itself in others; if you hate your enemies, you will contract such a vicious habit of mind, as by degrees will break out upon those who are your friends, or those who are indifferent to you." I might here observe how admirably this precept of morality (which derives the malignity of hatred from the passion itself, and not from its object) answers to that great rule which was dictated to the world about an hundred years before this philosopher wrote; but instead of that, I shall only take notice, with a real grief of heart, that the minds of many good men among us appear soured with party-principles, and alienated from one another in such a manner, as seems to me altogether inconsistent with the dictates either of reason or religion. Zeal for a public cause is apt to breed passions in the hearts of virtuous persons, to which the regard of their own private interest would never have betrayed them.

If this party-spirit has so ill an effect on our morals, it has likewise a very great one upon our judgments. We often hear a poor insipid paper or pamphlet cried up, and sometimes a noble piece depreciated, by those who are of a different principle from the author. One who is actuated by this spirit is almost under an incapacity of discerning either real blemishes or beauties. A man of merit in a different principle is like an object seen in two different mediums, that appears crooked or broken, however straight and entire

it may be in itself. For this reason there is scarce a person of any figure in England who does not go by two contrary characters, as opposite to one another as light and darkness. Knowledge and learning suffer in a particular manner from this strange prejudice, which at present prevails amongst all ranks and degrees in the British nation. As men formerly became eminent in learned societies by their parts and acquisitions, they now distinguish themselves by the warmth and violence with which they espouse their respective parties. Books are valued upon the like considerations: an abusive scurrilous style passes for satire, and a dull scheme of party notions is called fine writing.

There is one piece of sophistry practised by both sides, and that is the taking any scandalous story that has been ever whispered or invented of a private man, for a known undoubted truth, and raising suitable speculations upon it. Calumnies that have been never proved, or have been often refuted, are the ordinary postulata of these infamous scribblers, upon which they proceed as upon first principles granted by all men, though in their hearts they know they are false, or at best very doubtful. When they have laid these foundations of scurrility, it is no wonder that their superstructure is every way answerable to them. If this shameless practice of the present age endures much longer, praise and reproach will cease to be motives of action in good men.

There are certain periods of time in all governments

when this inhuman spirit prevails. Italy was long torn in pieces by the Guelphs and Ghibellines, and France by those who were for and against the League: but it is very unhappy for a man to be born in such a stormy and tempestuous season. It is the restless ambition of artful men that thus breaks a people into factions, and draws several well-meaning persons to their interest by a specious concern for their country. How many honest minds are filled with uncharitable and barbarous notions, out of their zeal for the public good? What cruelties and outrages would they not commit against men of an adverse party, whom they would honour and esteem, if instead of considering them as they are represented, they knew them as they are? Thus are persons of the greatest probity seduced into shameful errors and prejudices, and made bad men even by that noblest of principles, the love of their country. I cannot here forbear mentioning the famous Spanish proverb, *If there were neither fools nor knaves in the world, all people would be of one mind.* •

For my own part, I could heartily wish that all honest men would enter into an association, for the support of one another against the endeavours of those whom they ought to look upon as their common enemies, whatsoever side they may belong to. Were there such an honest body of neutral forces, we should never see the worst of men in great figures of life, because they are useful to a party; nor the best unregarded, because they are above practising those

methods which would be grateful to their faction. We should then single every criminal out of the herd, and hunt him down, however formidable and overgrown he might appear: on the contrary, we should shelter distressed innocence, and defend virtue, however beset with contempt or ridicule, envy or defamation. In short, we should not any longer regard our fellow-subjects as Whigs or Tories, but should make the man of merit our friend, and the villain our enemy.

*The Spectator*, No. 125.

Tuesday, July 24, 1711.

## LXIX

### *Party Rancour (concluded)*

*Tros Rutulusve fuat, nullo discrimine habeo* —VIRG.

IN my yesterday's paper I proposed, that the honest men of all parties should enter into a kind of association for the defence of one another, and the confusion of their common enemies. As it is designed this neutral body should act with a regard to nothing but truth and equity, and divest themselves of the little heats and prepossessions that cleave to parties of all kinds, I have prepared for them the following form of an association, which may express their intentions in the most plain and simple manner.

"We whose names are hereunto subscribed do solemnly declare, that we do in our consciences believe

two and two make four; and that we shall adjudge any man whatsoever to be our enemy who endeavours to persuade us to the contrary. We are likewise ready to maintain, with the hazard of all that is near and dear to us, that six is less than seven in all times and all places, and that ten will not be more three years hence than it is at present. We do also firmly declare, that it is our resolution as long as we live to call black black, and white white. And we shall upon all occasions oppose such persons that upon any day of the year shall call black white, or white black, with the utmost peril of our lives and fortunes."

Were there such a combination of honest men, who without any regard to places would endeavour to extirpate all such furious zealots as would sacrifice one half of their country to the passion and interest of the other; as also such infamous hypocrites, that are for promoting their own advantage under colour of the public good; with all the profligate immoral retainers to each side, that have nothing to recommend them but an implicit submission to their leaders; we should soon see that furious party-spirit extinguished, which may in time expose us to the derision and contempt of all the nations about us.

A member of this society, that would thus carefully employ himself in making room for merit, by throwing down the worthless and depraved part of mankind from those conspicuous stations of life to which they have been sometimes advanced, and all this without

any regard to his private interest, would be no small benefactor to his country.

I remember to have read in Diodorus Siculus an account of a very active little animal, which, I think he calls the Ichneumon, that makes it the whole business of his life to break the eggs of the crocodile, which he is always in search after. This instinct is the more remarkable, because the Ichneumon never feeds upon the eggs he has broken, nor any other way finds his account in them. Were it not for the incessant labours of this industrious animal, Egypt (says the historian) would be overrun with crocodiles; for the Egyptians are so far from destroying those pernicious creatures, that they worship them as gods.

If we look into the behaviour of ordinary partisans, we shall find them far from resembling this disinterested animal; and rather acting after the example of the wild Tartars, who are ambitious of destroying a man of the most extraordinary parts and accomplishments, as thinking that upon his decease the same talents, whatever post they qualified him for, enter of course into his destroyer.

As in the whole train of my speculations I have endeavoured, as much as I am able, to extinguish that pernicious spirit of passion and prejudice, which rages with the same violence in all parties, I am still the more desirous of doing some good in this particular, because I observe that the spirit of party reigns more in the country than in the town. It here contracts a kind of brutality, and rustic fierceness, to which men of a

politer conversation are wholly strangers. It extends itself even to the return of the bow and the hat ; and at the same time that the heads of parties preserve toward one another an outward show of good breeding, and keep up a perpetual intercourse of civilities, their tools that are dispersed in these outlying parts will not so much as mingle together at a cock-match. This humour fills the country with several periodical meetings of Whig jockeys and Tory fox-hunters ; not to mention the innumerable curses, frowns, and whispers it produces at a quarter-sessions.

I do not know whether I have observed in any of my former papers, that my friends Sir Roger de Coverley and Sir Andrew Freeport are of different principles, the first of them inclined to the landed and the other to the moneyed interest. This humour is so moderate in each of them, that it proceeds no farther than to an agreeable raillery, which very often diverts the rest of the club. I find however that the knight is a much stronger Tory in the country than in town, which, as he has told me in my ear, is absolutely necessary for the keeping up his interest. In all our journey from London to his house we did not so much as bait at a Whig inn ; or if by chance the coachman stopped at a wrong place, one of Sir Roger's servants would ride up to his master full speed, and whisper to him that the master of the house was against such an one in the last election. This often betrayed us into hard beds and bad cheer ; for we were not so inquisitive about the inn as the innkeeper ; and provided our landlord's



principles were sound, did not take any notice of the staleness of his provisions. This I found still the more inconvenient, because the better the host was, the worse generally were his accommodations; the fellow knowing very well, that those who were his friends would take up with coarse diet and an hard lodging. For these reasons, all the while I was upon the road I dreaded entering into an house of any one that Sir Roger had applauded for an honest man.

Since my stay at Sir Roger's in the country, I daily find more instances of this narrow party-humour. Being upon the bowling-green at a neighbouring market-town the other day (for that is the place where the gentlemen of one side meet once a week), I observed a stranger among them of a better presence and genteeler behaviour than ordinary; but was much surprised, that notwithstanding he was a very fair better, nobody would take him up. But upon inquiry I found, that he was one who had given a disagreeable vote in a former parliament, for which reason there was not a man upon that bowling-green who would have so much correspondence with him as to win his money of him.

Among other instances of this nature I must not omit one which concerns myself. Will Wimble was the other day relating several strange stories that he had picked up, nobody knows where, of a certain great man; and upon my staring at him, as one that was surprised to hear such things in the country, which had never been so much as whispered in the town,

Will stopped short in the thread of his discourse, and after dinner asked my friend Sir Roger in his ear, if he was sure that I was not a fanatic.

It gives me a serious concern to see such a spirit of dissension in the country; not only as it destroys virtue and common sense, and renders us in a manner barbarians towards one another, but as it perpetuates our animosities, widens our breaches, and transmits our present passions and prejudices to our posterity. For my own part, I am sometimes afraid that I discover the seeds of a civil war in these our divisions; and therefore cannot but bewail, as in their first principles, the miseries and calamities of our children.

*The Spectator*, No. 126.

Wednesday, July 25, 1711.

## LXX

### *Gipsies*

—*Semperque recentes*

*Convectare juvat praedas, et vivere rapto* —VIRG.

As I was yesterday riding out in the fields with my friend Sir Roger, we saw at a little distance from us a troop of gipsies. Upon the first discovery of them, my friend was in some doubt whether he should not exert the justice & the peace upon such a band of lawless vagrants; but not having his clerk with him, who is a necessary counsellor on these occasions, and fearing that his poultry might fare the worse for it, he let the thought drop; but at the same time gave me a

particular, account of the mischiefs they do in the country, in stealing people's goods and spoiling their servants. "If a stray piece of linen hangs upon an hedge," says Sir Roger, "they are sure to have it ; if a hog loses his way in the fields, it is ten to one but he becomes their prey ; our geese cannot live in peace for them ; if a man prosecutes them with severity, his hen-roost is sure to pay for it. They generally straggle into these parts about this time of the year ; and set the heads of our servant-maids so agog for husbands, that we do not expect to have any business done as it should be whilst they are in the country. I have an honest dairy-maid who crosses their hands with a piece of silver every summer, and never fails being promised the handsomest young fellow in the parish for her pains. Your friend the butler has been fool enough to be seduced by them ; and though he is sure to lose a knife, a fork, or a spoon every time his fortune is told him, generally shuts himself up in the pantry with an old gipsy for about half an hour once in a twelvemonth. Sweethearts are the things they live upon, which they bestow very plentifully upon all those that apply themselves to them. You see now and then some handsome young jades among them : the sluts have very often white teeth and black eyes."

Sir Roger observing that I listened "with great attention to his account of a people who were so entirely new to me, told me, that if I would they should tell us our fortunes. As I was very well pleased with the knight's proposal, we rid up and communicated

our hands to them. A Cassandra of the crew, after having examined my lines very diligently, told me, that I loved a pretty maid in a corner, that I was a good woman's man, with some other particulars which I do not think proper to relate. My friend Sir Roger alighted from his horse, and exposing his palm to two or three that stood by him, they crumpled it into all shapes, and diligently scanned every wrinkle that could be made in it; when one of them, who was older and more sunburnt than the rest, told him, that he had a widow in his line of life: upon which the knight cried, "Go, go, you are an idle baggage"; and at the same time smiled upon me. The gipsy finding he was not displeased in his heart, told him, after a further inquiry into his hand, that his true-love was constant, and that she should dream of him to-night: my old friend cried "Pish," and bid her go on. The gipsy told him that he was a bachelor, but would not be so long; and that he was dearer to somebody than he thought: the knight still repeated, she was an idle baggage, and bid her go on. "Ah, master," says the gipsy, "that roguish leer of yours makes a pretty woman's heart ache; you ha'n't that simper about the mouth for nothing." The uncouth gibberish with which all this was uttered, like the darkness of an oracle, made us the more attentive to it. To be short, the knight left the money with her that he had crossed her hand with, and got up again on his horse.

As we were riding away, Sir Roger told me, that he knew several sensible people who believed these gipsies.

now and 'then foretold very strange things ; and for half an hour together appeared more jocund than ordinary. In the height of his good humour, meeting a common beggar upon the road who was no conjurer, as he went to relieve him he found his pocket was picked ; that being a kind of palmistry at which this race of vermin are very dexterous.

I might here entertain my reader with historical remarks on this idle profligate people, who infest all the countries of Europe, and live in the midst of governments in a kind of commonwealth by themselves. But instead of entering into observations of this nature, I shall fill the remaining part of my paper with a story which is still fresh in Holland, and was printed in one of our monthly accounts about twenty years ago. “ As the *Trekschuyt*, or Hackney-boat, which carries passengers from Leyden to Amsterdam, was putting off, a boy running along the side of the canal desired to be taken in ; which the master of the boat refused, because the lad had not quite money enough to pay the usual fare. An eminent merchant being pleased with the looks of the boy, and secretly touched with compassion towards him, paid the money for him, and ordered him to be taken on board. Upon talking with him afterwards, he found that he could speak readily in three or four languages, and learned upon further examination that he had been stolen away when he was a child by a gipsy, and had rampled ever since with a gang of those strollers up and down several parts of Europe. It happened that the merchant,

whose heart seems to have inclined towards the boy by a secret kind of instinct, had himself lost a child some years before. The parents, after a long search for him, gave him for drowned in one of the canals with which that country abounds ; and the mother was so afflicted at the loss of a fine boy, who was her only son, that she died for grief of it. Upon laying together all particulars, and examining the several moles and marks by which the mother used to describe the child when he was first missing, the boy proved to be the son of the merchant whose heart had so unaccountably melted at the sight of him. The lad was very well pleased to find a father who was so rich, and likely to leave him a good estate ; the father on the other hand was not a little delighted to see a son return to him, whom he had given for lost, with such a strength of constitution, sharpness of understanding, and skill in languages." Here the printed story leaves off ; but if I may give credit to reports, our linguist having received such extraordinary rudiments towards a good education, was afterwards trained up in everything that becomes a gentleman ; wearing off by little and little all the vicious habits and practices that he had been used to in the course of his peregrinations : nay, it is said, that he has since been employed in foreign courts upon national business, with great reputation to himself and honour to those who sent him, and that he has visited several countries as a public minister, in which he formerly wandered as a gipsy.

## LXXI

*The Spectator returns to Town*

—*Ipsae rursum concedite sylvae.*—VIRG.

IT is usual for a man who loves country sports to preserve the game in his own grounds, and divert himself upon those that belong to his neighbour. My friend Sir Roger generally goes two or three miles from his house, and gets into the frontiers of his estate, before he beats about in search of a hare or partridge, on purpose to spare his own fields, where he is always sure of finding diversion when the worst comes to the worst. By this means the breed about his house has time to increase and multiply, besides that the sport is the more agreeable where the game is harder to come at, and where it does not lie so thick as to produce any perplexity or confusion in the pursuit. For these reasons the country gentleman, like the fox, seldom preys near his own home.

In the same manner I have made a month's excursion out of the town, which is the great field of game for sportsmen of my species, to try my fortune in the country, where I have started several subjects, and hunted them down, with some pleasure to myself, and I hope to others. I am here forced to use a great deal of diligence before I can spring anything to my mind, whereas in town, whilst I am following one character, it is ten to one but I am crossed in my way

by another, and put up such a variety of odd creatures in both sexes, that they foil the scent of one another, and puzzle the chase. My greatest difficulty in the country is to find sport, and in town to choose it. In the meantime, as I have given a whole month's rest to the cities of London and Westminster, I promise myself abundance of new game upon my return thither.

It is indeed high time for me to leave the country, since I find the whole neighbourhood begin to grow very inquisitive after my name and character; my love of solitude, taciturnity, and particular way of life, having raised a great curiosity in all these parts.

The notions which have been framed of me are various; some look upon me as very proud, some as very modest, and some as very melancholy. Will Wimble, as my friend the butler tells me, observing me very much alone, and extremely silent when I am in company, is afraid I have killed a man. The country people seem to suspect me for a conjurer; and some of them, hearing of the visit which I made to Moll White, will needs have it that Sir Roger has brought down a cunning man with him, to cure the old woman and free the country from her charms. So that the character which I go under in part of the neighbourhood, is what they here call a *white witch*.

A justice of peace, who lives about five miles off, and is not of Sir Roger's party, has, it seems, said twice or thrice at his table, that he wishes Sir Roger does not harbour a Jesuit in his house, and that he



thinks the gentlemen of the country would do very well to make me give some account of myself.

On the other side, some of Sir Roger's friends are afraid the old knight is imposed upon by a designing fellow, and as they have heard he converses very promiscuously when he is in town, do not know but he has brought down with him some discarded Whig, that is sullen, and says nothing, because he is out of place.

Such is the variety of opinions which are here entertained of me, so that I pass among some for a disaffected person, and among others for a Popish priest ; among some for a wizard, and among others for a murderer ; and all this for no other reason, that I can imagine, but because I do not hoot and hollow and make a noise. It is true, my friend Sir Roger tells them that it is my way, and that I am only a philosopher ; but this will not satisfy them. They think there is more in me than he discovers, and that I do not hold my tongue for nothing.

For these and other reasons I shall set out for London to-morrow, having found by experience that the country is not a place for a person of my temper, who does not love jollity, and what they call good-neighbourhood. A man that is out of humour when an unexpected guest breaks in upon him, and does not care for sacrificing an afternoon to every chance-comer ; that will be the master of his own time, and the pursuer of his own inclinations, makes but a very unsociable figure in this kind of life. I shall therefore retire into the town, if I may make use of that phrase, and get into the crowd again

as fast as I can, in order to be alone. I can there raise what speculations I please upon others without being observed myself, and at the same time enjoy all the advantages of company with all the privileges of solitude. In the meanwhile, to finish the month and conclude these my rural speculations, I shall here insert a letter from my friend Will Honeycomb, who has not lived a month for these forty years out of the smoke of London, and rallies me after his way upon my country life.

“DEAR SPEC,—I suppose this letter will find thee picking of daisies, or smelling to a lock of hay, or passing away thy time in some innocent country diversion of the like nature. I have however orders from the club to summon thee up to town, being all of us cursedly afraid thou wilt not be able to relish our company, after thy conversations with Moll White and Will Wimble. Prithee don’t send us up any more stories of a cock and a bull, nor frighten the town with spirits and witches. Thy speculations begin to smell confoundedly of woods and meadows. If thou dost not come up quickly, we shall conclude that thou art in love with one of Sir Roger’s dairy-maids. Service to the Knight. Sir Andrew is grown the cock of the club since he left us, and if he does not return quickly, will make every mother’s son of us commonwealth’s men.—Dear SPEC.,  
thine eternally,

WILL HONEYCOMB.”

## LXXII

*The English Language*

*Est brevitate opus, ut curvet sententia*—HOR.

I HAVE somewhere read of an eminent person, who used in his private offices of devotion to give thanks to heaven that he was born a Frenchman: for my own part, I look upon it as a peculiar blessing that I was born an Englishman. Among many other reasons, I think myself very happy in my country, as the language of it is wonderfully adapted to a man who is sparing of his words, and an enemy to loquacity.

As I have frequently reflected on my good fortune in this particular, I shall communicate to the public my speculations upon the English tongue, not doubting but they will be acceptable to all my curious readers.

The English delight in silence more than any other European nation, if the remarks which are made on us by foreigners are true. Our discourse is not kept up in conversation, but falls into more pauses and intervals than in our neighbouring countries; as it is observed, that the matter of our writings is thrown much closer together, and lies in a narrower compass than is usual in the works of foreign authors: for, to favour our natural taciturnity, when we are obliged to utter our thoughts, we do it in the shortest way we are able, and give as quick a birth to our conceptions as possible.

This humour shows itself in several remarks that we may make upon the English language. As first of all by its abounding in monosyllables, which gives us an opportunity of delivering our thoughts in few sounds. This indeed takes off from the elegance of our tongue, but at the same time expresses our ideas in the readiest manner, and consequently answers the first design of speech better than the multitude of syllables, which make the words of other languages more tunable and sonorous. The sounds of our English words are commonly like those of string music, short and transient, which rise and perish upon a single touch; those of other languages are like the notes of wind instruments, sweet and swelling, and lengthened out into variety of modulation.

In the next place we may observe, that where the words are not monosyllables, we often make them so, as much as lies in our power, by our rapidity of pronunciation; as it generally happens in most of our long words which are derived from the Latin, where we contract the length of the syllables that gives them a grave and solemn air in their own language, to make them more proper for dispatch, and more conformable to the genius of our tongue. This we may find in a multitude of words, as *liberty*, *conspiracy*, *theatre*, *orator*, etc.

The same natural aversion to loquacity has of late years made a very considerable alteration in our language, by closing in one syllable the termination of our preterperfect tense, as in the words *drown'd*, *walk'd*,

*arriv'd*, for *drowned*, *walked*, *arrived*, which has very much disfigured the tongue, and turned a tenth part of our smoothest words into so many clusters of consonants. This is the more remarkable, because the want of vowels in our language has been the general complaint of our politest authors, who nevertheless are the men that have made these retrenchments, and consequently very much increased our former scarcity.

This reflection on the words that end in *ed* I have heard in conversation from one of the greatest geniuses this age has produced. I think we may add to the foregoing observation, the change which has happened in our language, by the abbreviation of several words that are terminated in *eth*, by substituting an *s* in the room of the last syllable, as in *drowns*, *walks*, *arrives*, and innumerable other words, which in the pronunciation of our forefathers were *drowneth*, *walketh*, *arriveth*. This has wonderfully multiplied a letter which was before too frequent in the English tongue, and added to that hissing in our language, which is taken so much notice of by foreigners ; but at the same time humours our taciturnity, and eases us of many superfluous syllables.

I might here observe, that the same single letter on many occasions does the office of a whole word, and represents the *his* and *her* of our forefathers. There is no doubt but the ear of a foreigner, which is the best judge in this case, would very much disapprove of such innovations, which indeed we do ourselves in some

measure, by retaining the old termination in writing, and in all the solemn offices of our religion.

As in the instances I have given we have epitomized many of our particular words to the detriment of our tongue, so on other occasions we have drawn two words into one, which has likewise very much untuned our language, and clogged it with consonants, as *mayn't*, *can't*, *shan't*, *won't*, and the like, for *may not*, *can not*, *shall not*, *will not*, etc.

It is perhaps this humour of speaking no more than we needs must, which has so miserably curtailed some of our words, that in familiar writings and conversations they often lose all but their first syllables, as in *mob. rep. pos. incog.* and the like ; and as all ridiculous words make their first entry into a language by familiar phrases, I dare not answer for these that they will not in time be looked upon as a part of our tongue. We see some of our poets have been so indiscreet as to imitate Hudibras's doggrel expressions in their serious compositions, by throwing out the signs of our substantives, which are essential to the English language. Nay, this humour of shortening our language had once run so far, that some of our celebrated authors, among whom we may reckon Sir Roger L'Estrange in particular, began to prune their words of all superfluous letters, as they termed them, in order to adjust the spelling to the pronunciation ; which would have confounded all our etymologies, and have quite destroyed our tongue.

We may here likewise observe, that our proper

names, when familiarized in English, generally dwindle to monosyllables, whereas in other modern languages they receive a softer turn on this occasion, by the addition of a new syllable. Nick in Italian is Nicolini; Jack, in French Janot; and so of the rest.

There is another particular in our language which is a great instance of our frugality of words, and that is the suppressing of several particles which must be produced in other tongues to make a sentence intelligible: this often perplexes the best writers, when they find the relatives *whom*, *which*, or *they* at their mercy, whether they may have admission or not, and will never be decided till we have something like an Academy, that by the best authorities and rules drawn from the analogy of languages shall settle all controversies between grammar and idiom.

I have only considered our language as it shows the genius and natural temper of the English, which is modest, thoughtful, and sincere, and which perhaps may recommend the people, though it has spoiled the tongue. We might perhaps carry the same thought into other languages, and deduce a great part of what is peculiar to them from the genius of the people who speak them. It is certain, the light, talkative humour of the French has not a little infected their tongue, which might be shown by many instances; as the genius of the Italians, which is so much addicted to music and ceremony, has moulded all their words and phrases to those particular uses. The stateliness and gravity of the Spaniards shows itself to perfection in

the solemnity of their language ; and the blunt honest humour of the Germans sounds better in the roughness of the High Dutch, than it would in a politer tongue.

*The Spectator*, No. 135.

Saturday, August 4, 1711.

## LXXIII

### *The Vision of Mirzah*

—*Omnem, quae nunc obducta tuenti  
Mortales hebetat visus tibi, et humida circum  
Caligat, nubem eripiam—* VIRG.

WHEN I was at Grand Cairo, I picked up several oriental manuscripts, which I have still by me. Among others I met with one entitled *The Visions of Mirzah*, which I have read over with great pleasure. I intend to give it to the public when I have no other entertainment for them ; and shall begin with the first vision, which I have translated word for word as follows.

“ On the fifth day of the moon, which according to the custom of my forefathers I always keep holy, after having washed myself, and offered up my morning devotions, I ascended the high hills of Bagdad, in order to pass the rest of the day in meditation and prayer. As I was here airing myself on the tops of the mountains, I fell into a profound contemplation on the vanity of human life ; and passing from one thought to another, ‘ Surely,’ said I, ‘ man is but a shadow and life a dream.’ Whilst I was thus



musing, I cast my eyes towards the summit of a rock that was not far from me, where I discovered one in the habit of a shepherd, with a little musical instrument in his hand. As I looked upon him he applied it to his lips, and began to play upon it. The sound of it was exceeding sweet, and wrought into a variety of tunes that were inexpressibly melodious, and altogether different from anything I had ever heard: they put me in mind of those heavenly airs that are played to the departed souls of good men upon their first arrival in paradise, to wear out the impressions of the last agonies, and qualify them for the pleasures of that happy place. My heart melted away in secret raptures.

“I had been often told that the rock before me was the haunt of a genius; and that several had been entertained with music who had passed by it, but never heard that the musician had before made himself visible. When he had raised my thoughts by those transporting airs which he played, to taste the pleasures of his conversation, as I looked upon him like one astonished, he beckoned to me, and by the waving of his hand directed me to approach the place where he sat. I drew near with that reverence which is due to a superior nature; and as my heart was entirely subdued by the captivating strains I had heard, I fell down at his feet and wept. The genius smiled upon me with a look of compassion and affability that familiarized him to my imagination, and at once dispelled all the fears and apprehensions with which I approached

him. He lifted me from the ground, and taking me by the hand, 'Mirzah,' said he, 'I have heard thee in thy soliloquies; follow me.'

"He then led me to the highest pinnacle of the rock, and placing me on the top of it, 'Cast thy eyes eastward,' said he, 'and tell me what thou seest.' 'I see,' said I, 'a huge valley and a prodigious tide of water rolling through it.' 'The valley that thou seest,' said he, 'is the vale of misery, and the tide of water that thou seest is part of the great tide of eternity.' 'What is the reason,' said I, 'that the tide I see rises out of a thick mist at one end, and again loses itself in a thick mist at the other?' 'What thou seest,' said he, 'is that portion of eternity which is called time, measured out by the sun, and reaching from the beginning of the world to its consummation. Examine now,' said he, 'this sea that is thus bounded with darkness at both ends, and tell me what thou discoverest in it.' 'I see a bridge,' said I, 'standing in the midst of the tide.' 'The bridge thou seest,' said he, 'is human life: consider it attentively.' Upon a more leisurely survey of it, I found that it consisted of threescore and ten entire arches, with several broken arches, which, added to those that were entire, made up the number about an hundred. As I was counting the arches, the genius told me that this bridge consisted at first of a thousand arches; but that a great flood swept away the rest, and left the bridge in the ruinous condition I now beheld it. 'But, tell me further,' said he, 'what thou discoverest on

it.' 'I see multitudes of people passing over it,' said I, 'and a black cloud hanging on each end of it.' As I looked more attentively, I saw several of the passengers dropping through the bridge into the great tide that flowed underneath it ; and upon further examination, perceived there were innumerable trap-doors that lay concealed in the bridge, which the passengers no sooner trod upon, but they fell through them into the tide and immediately disappeared. These hidden pit-falls were set very thick at the entrance of the bridge, so that the throngs of people no sooner broke through the cloud, but many of them fell into them. They grew thinner towards the middle, but multiplied and lay closer together towards the end of the arches that were entire.

"There were indeed some persons, but their number was very small, that continued a kind of hobbling march on the broken arches, but fell through one after another, being quite tired and spent with so long a walk.

"I passed some time in the contemplation of this wonderful structure, and the great variety of objects which it presented. My heart was filled with a deep melancholy to see several dropping unexpectedly in the midst of mirth and jollity, and catching at everything that stood by them to save themselves. Some were looking up towards the heavens in a thoughtful posture, and in the midst of a speculation stumbled and fell out of sight. Multitudes were very busy in the pursuit of bubbles that glittered in their eyes and

danced before them; but often, when they thought themselves within the reach of them, their footing failed and down they sunk. In this confusion of objects, I observed some with scimetars in their hands, and others with urinals, who ran to and fro upon the bridge, thrusting several persons on trap-doors which did not seem to lie in their way, and which they might have escaped had they not been thus forced upon them.

“The genius seeing me indulge myself in this melancholy prospect, told me I had dwelt long enough upon it: ‘Take thine eyes off the bridge,’ said he, ‘and tell me if thou yet seest anything thou dost not comprehend.’ Upon looking up, ‘What mean,’ said I, ‘those great flights of birds that are perpetually hovering about the bridge, and settling upon it from time to time? I see vultures, harpies, ravens, cormorants, and among many other feathered creatures several little winged boys, that perch in great numbers upon the middle arches.’ ‘These,’ said the genius, ‘are envy, avarice, superstition, despair, love, with the like cares and passions that infest human life.’

“I here fetched a deep sigh; ‘Alas,’ said I, ‘man was made in vain! How is he given away to misery and mortality! tortured in life, and swallowed up in death!’ The genius, being moved with compassion towards me, bid me quit so uncomfortable a prospect. ‘Look no more,’ said he, ‘on man in the first stage of his existence, in his setting out for eternity; but cast thine eye on that thick mist into which the tide

bears the several generations of mortals that fall into it.' I directed my sight as I was ordered, and (whether or no the good genius strengthened it with any supernatural force, or dissipated part of the mist that was before too thick for the eye to penetrate) I saw the valley opening at the farther end, and spreading forth into an immense ocean, that had a huge rock of adamant running through the midst of it, and dividing it into two equal parts. The clouds still rested on one half of it, insomuch that I could discover nothing in it: but the other appeared to me a vast ocean planted with innumerable islands, that were covered with fruits and flowers, and interwoven with a thousand little shining seas that ran among them. I could see persons dressed in glorious habits with garlands upon their heads, passing among the trees, lying down by the side of fountains, or resting on beds of flowers; and could hear a confused harmony of singing birds, falling waters, human voices, and musical instruments. Gladness grew in me upon the discovery of so delightful a scene. I wished for the wings of an eagle, that I might fly away to those happy seats; but the genius told me there was no passage to them, except through the gates of death that I saw opening every moment upon the bridge. 'The islands,' said he, 'that lie so fresh and green before thee, and with which the whole face of the ocean appears spotted as far as thou canst see, are more in number than the sands on the seashore; there are myriads of islands behind those which thou here

discoverest, reaching farther than thine eye or even thine imagination can extend itself. These are the mansions of good men after death, who according to the degree and kinds of virtue in which they excelled, are distributed among these several islands, which abound with pleasures of different kinds and degrees, suitable to the relishes and perfections of those who are settled in them; every island is a paradise accommodated to its respective inhabitants. Are not these, O Mirzah, habitations worth contending for? Does life appear miserable, that gives thee opportunities of earning such a reward? Is death to be feared, that will convey thee to so happy an existence? Think not man was made in vain, who has such an eternity reserved for him.' I gazed with inexpressible pleasure on these happy islands. 'At length,' said I, 'show me now, I beseech thee, the secrets that lie hid under those dark clouds which cover the ocean on the other side of the rock of adamant.' The genius making me no answer, I turned about to address myself to him a second time, but I found that he had left me; I then turned again to the vision which I had been so long contemplating; but instead of the rolling tide, the arched bridge, and the happy islands, I saw nothing but the long hollow valley of Bagdad, with oxen, sheep, and camels grazing upon the sides of it."

• The end of the first vision of Mirzah.

## LXXIV

*The Constant Mind*

—*Servetur ad unum*

*Qualis ab incepto processerit, et sibi constet—*

HOR.

NOTHING that is not a real crime makes a man appear so contemptible and little in the eyes of the world as inconstancy, especially when it regards religion or party. In either of these cases, though a man perhaps does but his duty in changing his side, he not only makes himself hated by those he left, but is seldom heartily esteemed by those he comes over to.

In these great articles of life, therefore, a man's conviction ought to be very strong and if possible so well timed that worldly advantages may seem to have no share in it, or mankind will be ill-natured enough to think he does not change sides out of principle, but either out of levity of temper or prospects of interest. Converts and renegades of all kinds should take particular care to let the world see they act upon honourable motives; or whatever approbations they may receive from themselves, and applauses from those they converse with, they may be very well assured that they are the scorn of all good men, and the public marks of infamy and derision.

Irresolution on the schemes of life which offer themselves to our choice, and inconstancy in pursuing them, are the greatest and most universal causes of all our

disquiet and unhappiness. When ambition pulls one way, interest another, inclination a third, and perhaps reason contrary to all, a man is likely to pass his time but ill who has so many different parties to please. When the mind hovers among such a variety of allurements, one had better settle on a way of life that is not the very best we might have chosen, than grow old without determining our choice, and go out of the world, as the greatest part of mankind do, before we have resolved how to live in it. There is but one method of setting ourselves at rest in this particular, and that is by adhering stedfastly to one great end as the chief and ultimate aim of all our pursuits. If we are firmly resolved to live up to the dictates of reason, without any regard to wealth, reputation, or the like considerations, any more than as they fall in with our principal design, we may go through life with steadiness and pleasure; but if we act by several broken views, and will not only be virtuous, but wealthy, popular, and everything that has a value set upon it by the world, we shall live and die in misery and repentance.

One would take more than ordinary care to guard oneself against this particular imperfection, because it is that which our nature very strongly inclines us to; for if we examine ourselves thoroughly, we shall find that we are the most changeable beings in the universe. In respect of our understanding, we often embrace and reject the very same opinions; whereas beings above and beneath us have probably no opinions at all, or



at least no wavering and uncertainties in those they have. Our superiors are guided by intuition, and our inferiors by instinct. In respect of our wills, we fall into crimes and recover out of them, are amiable or odious in the eyes of our great Judge, and pass our whole life in offending and asking pardon. On the contrary, the beings underneath us are not capable of sinning, nor those above us of repenting. The one is out of the possibilities of duty, and the other fixed in an eternal course of sin, or an eternal course of virtue.

There is scarce a state of life, or stage in it, which does not produce changes and revolutions in the mind of man. Our schemes of thought in infancy are lost in those of youth; these too take a different turn in manhood, till old age often leads us back into our former infancy. A new title or an unexpected success throws us out of ourselves, and in a manner destroys our identity. A cloudy day or a little sunshine have as great an influence on many constitutions as the most real blessings or misfortunes. A dream varies our being, and changes our condition while it lasts; and every passion, not to mention health and sickness and the greater alterations in body and mind, makes us appear almost different creatures. If a man is so distinguished among other beings by this infirmity, what can we think of such as make themselves remarkable for it even among their own species? It is a very trifling character to be one of the most variable beings of the most variable kind, especially if we consider

that He who is the great standard of perfection has in Him no shadow of change, but is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

As this mutability of temper and inconsistency with ourselves is the greatest weakness of human nature, so it makes the person who is remarkable for it in a very particular manner more ridiculous than any other infirmity whatsoever, as it sets him in a greater variety of foolish lights, and distinguishes him from himself by an opposition of parti-coloured characters. The most humorous character in Horace is founded upon this unevenness of temper and irregularity of conduct.

—*Sardus habebat*

*Ille Tigellius hoc : Caesar, qui cogere posset,  
Si peteret per amicitiam patris atque suam, non  
Quidquam proficeret ; si collibuisse, ab ovo  
Usque ad mala citaret, Iō Bacche, modo summa  
Voce, modo hac resonat quae chordis quatuor ima.  
Nil aequale homini fuit illi ; saepe velut qui  
Currebat fugiens hostem, persaepe velut qui  
Junois sacra ferret ; habebat saepe ducentos,  
Saepe decem servos ; modo, reges atque tetrarchas,  
Omnia magna loquens ; modo, "Sit mihi mensa tripes, et  
Concha salis puri, et toga, quae defendere frigus,  
Quamvis crassa, queat." Decies centena dedisses  
Huic parco paucis contento, quinque diebus  
Nil erat in oculis. Noctes vigilabat ad ipsum  
Mane : diem totum stertebat. Nil fuit unquam  
Sic impari sibi.*

HOR. Sat. 3, lib. i.

Instead of translating this passage in Horace, I shall entertain my English reader with the description of a parallel character, that is wonderfully well finished by Mr. Dryden, and raised upon the same foundation.

In the first rank of these did Zimri stand :  
 A man so various, that he seem'd to be  
 Not one, but all mankind's epitome.  
 Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong ;  
 Was everything by starts, and nothing long :  
 But, in the course of one revolving moon,  
 Was chymist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon :  
 Then all for women, painting, rhyming, drinking,  
 Besides ten thousand freaks that died in thinking.  
 Blest madman, who could every hour employ,  
 With something new to wish, or to enjoy !<sup>1</sup>

*The Spectator*, No. 162. Wednesday, September 5, 1711.

## LXXV

### *Theodosius and Constantia*

*Illa ; Quis et me, inquit, miseram, et te perdidit, Orpheu ?  
 Jamque vale : feror ingenti circumdata nocte,  
 Invalidasque tibi tendens, heu ! non tua, pulmas.*— VIRG.

CONSTANTIA was a woman of extraordinary wit and beauty, but very unhappy in a father, who, having arrived at great riches by his own industry, took delight in nothing but his money. Theodosius was the younger son of a decayed family, of great parts and learning, improved by a genteel and virtuous education. When he was in the twentieth year of his age he became acquainted with Constantia, who had not then passed her fifteenth. As he lived but a few miles' distance from her father's house, he had frequent opportunities of seeing her ; and by the advantages of a good person and a pleasing conversation, made

<sup>1</sup> Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel*, bk. i. lines 244 sqq. Zimri is Villiers, Duke of Buckingham.

such an impression in her heart as it was impossible for time to efface : he was himself no less smitten with Constantia. A long acquaintance made them still discover new beauties in each other, and by degrees raised in them that mutual passion which had an influence on their following lives. It unfortunately happened, that in the midst of this intercourse of love and friendship between Theodosius and Constantia, there broke out an irreparable quarrel between their parents, the one valuing himself too much upon his birth, and the other upon his possessions. The father of Constantia was so incensed at the father of Theodosius, that he contracted an unreasonable aversion towards his son, insomuch that he forbade him his house, and charged his daughter upon her duty never to see him more. In the meantime, to break off all communication between the two lovers, who he knew entertained secret hopes of some favourable opportunity that should bring them together, he found out a young gentleman of a good fortune and an agreeable person, whom he pitched upon as a husband for his daughter. He soon concerted this affair so well, that he told Constantia it was his design to marry her to such a gentleman, and that her wedding should be celebrated on such a day. Constantia, who was overawed with the authority of her father, and unable to object anything against so advantageous a match, received the proposal with a profound silence, which her father commended in her, as the most decent manner of a virgin's giving her consent to an overture of that kind.

The noise of this intended marriage soon reached Theodosius, who, after a long tumult of passions which naturally rise in a lover's heart on such an occasion, writ the following letter to Constantia :

“ The thought of my Constantia, which for some years has been my only happiness, is now become a greater torment to me than I am able to bear. Must I then live to see you another's ? The streams, the fields and meadows, where we have so often talked together, grow painful to me ; life itself is become a burden. May you long be happy in the world, but forget that there was ever such a man in it as

“ THEODOSIUS.”

This letter was conveyed to Constantia that very evening, who fainted at the reading of it ; and the next morning she was much more alarmed by two or three messengers, that came to her father's house one after another to inquire if they had heard anything of Theodosius, who it seems had left his chamber about midnight, and could nowhere be found. The deep melancholy which had hung upon his mind some time before, made them apprehend the worst that could befall him. Constantia, who knew that nothing but the report of her marriage could have driven him to such extremities, was not to be comforted : she now accused herself for having so tamely given an ear to the proposal of a husband, and looked upon the new lover as the murderer of Theodosius : in short, she resolved to suffer the utmost effects of her father's

displeasure, rather than comply with a marriage which appeared to her so full of guilt and horror. The father, seeing himself entirely rid of Theodosius, and likely to keep a considerable portion in his family, was not very much concerned at the obstinate refusal of his daughter; and did not find it very difficult to excuse himself upon that account to his intended son-in-law, who had all along regarded this alliance rather as a marriage of convenience than of love. Constantia had now no relief but in her devotions and exercises of religion, to which her afflictions had so entirely subjected her mind, that after some years had abated the violence of her sorrows, and settled her thoughts in a kind of tranquillity, she resolved to pass the remainder of her days in a convent. Her father was not displeased with a resolution which would save money in his family, and readily complied with his daughter's intentions. Accordingly, in the twenty-fifth year of her age, while her beauty was yet in all its height and bloom, he carried her to a neighbouring city, in order to look out a sisterhood of nuns among whom to place his daughter. There was in this place a Father of a convent who was very much renowned for his piety and exemplary life; and as it is usual in the Romish Church for those who are under any great affliction or trouble of mind, to apply themselves to the most eminent confessors for pardon and consolation, our beautiful votary took the opportunity of confessing herself to this celebrated father.

We must now return to Theodosius, who, the very

morning that the above-mentioned inquiries had been made after him, arrived at a religious house in the city where now Constantia resided; and desiring that secrecy and concealment of the Fathers of the convent which is very usual upon any extraordinary occasion, he made himself one of the order, with a private vow never to inquire after Constantia; whom he looked upon as given away to his rival upon the day on which, according to common fame, their marriage was to have been solemnized. Having in his youth made a good progress in learning, that he might dedicate himself more entirely to religion he entered into holy orders, and in a few years became renowned for his sanctity of life, and those pious sentiments which he inspired into all who conversed with him. It was this holy man to whom Constantia had determined to apply herself in confession, though neither she nor any other besides the prior of the convent knew anything of his name or family. The gay, the amiable Theodosius had now taken upon him the name of Father Francis; and was so far concealed in a long beard, a shaven head, and a religious habit, that it was impossible to discover the man of the world in the venerable conventual.

As he was one morning shut up in his confessional, Constantia kneeling by him opened the state of her soul to him; and after having given him the history of a life full of innocence, she burst out in tears, and entered upon that part of her story in which he himself had so great a share. "My behaviour," says she, "has, I fear, been the death of a man who had no other fault

but that of loving me too much. Heaven only knows how dear he was to me whilst he lived, and how bitter the remembrance of him has been to me since his death." She here paused, and lifted up her eyes that streamed with tears towards the Father; who was so moved with the sense of her sorrows, that he could only command his voice, which was broke with sighs and sobbings, so far as to bid her proceed. She followed his directions, and in a flood of tears poured out her heart before him. The Father could not forbear weeping aloud, insomuch that in the agonies of his grief the seat shook under him. Constantia, who thought the good man was thus moved by his compassion towards her, and by the horror of her guilt, proceeded with the utmost contrition to acquaint him with that vow of virginity in which she was going to engage herself, as the proper atonement for her sins, and the only sacrifice she could make to the memory of Theodosius. The Father, who by this time had pretty well composed himself, burst out again in tears upon hearing that name to which he had been so long disused, and upon receiving this instance of an unparalleled fidelity from one who he thought had several years since given herself up to the possession of another. Amidst the interruptions of his sorrow, seeing his penitent overwhelmed with grief, he was only able to bid her from time to time be comforted—to tell her that her sins were forgiven her—that her guilt was not so great as she apprehended—that she should not suffer herself to be afflicted above measure. After which he re-



covered himself enough to give her the absolution in form ; directing her at the same time to repair to him again the next day, that he might encourage her in the pious resolutions she had taken, and give her suitable exhortations for her behaviour in it. Constantia retired, and the next morning renewed her applications. Theodosius, having manned his soul with proper thoughts and reflections, exerted himself on this occasion in the best manner he could to animate his penitent, in the course of life she was entering upon, and wear out of her mind those groundless fears and apprehensions which had taken possession of it ; concluding with a promise to her, that he would from time to time continue his admonitions when she should have taken upon her the holy veil. "The rules of our respective orders," says he, "will not permit that I should see you ; but you may assure yourself not only of having a place in my prayers, but of receiving such frequent instructions as I can convey to you by letters. Go on cheerfully in the glorious course you have undertaken, and you will quickly find such a peace and satisfaction in your mind, which it is not in the power of the world to give."

Constantia's heart was so elevated with the discourse of Father Francis, that the very next day she entered upon her vow. As soon as the solemnities of her reception were over, she retired, as it is usual, with the abbess into her own apartment.

"The abbess had been informed the night before of all that had passed between her novitiate and Father

Francis: from whom she now delivered to her the following letter.

“As the first-fruits of those joys and consolations which you may expect from the life you are now engaged in, I must acquaint you that Theodosius, whose death sits so heavy upon your thoughts, is still alive; and that the Father, to whom you have confessed yourself, was once that Theodosius whom you so much lament. The love which we have had for one another will make us more happy in its disappointment than it could have done in its success. Providence has disposed of us for our advantage, though not according to our wishes. Consider your Theodosius still as dead, but assure yourself of one who will not cease to pray for you in Father FRANCIS.”

Constantia saw that the handwriting agreed with the contents of the letter; and upon reflecting on the voice of the person, the behaviour, and above all the extreme sorrow of the Father during her confession, she discovered Theodosius in every particular. After having wept with tears of joy, “It is enough,” says she, “Theodosius is still in being: I shall live with comfort and die in peace.”

The letters which the Father sent her afterwards are yet extant in the nunnery where she resided, and are often read to the young religious, in order to inspire them with good resolutions and sentiments of virtue. It so happened, that after Constantia had lived about ten years in the cloister, a violent fever broke out in

the place, which swept away great multitudes, and among others Theodosius. Upon his deathbed he sent his benediction in a very moving manner to Constantia, who at that time was herself so far gone in the same fatal distemper, that she lay delirious. Upon the interval which generally precedes death in sicknesses of this nature, the abbess, finding that the physicians had given her over, told her that Theodosius was just gone before her, and that he had sent her his benediction in his last moments. Constantia received it with pleasure: "And now," says she, "if I do not ask anything improper, let me be buried by Theodosius. My vow reaches no farther than the grave. What I ask is, I hope, no violation of it." She died soon after, and was interred according to her request.

Their tombs are still to be seen, with a short Latin inscription over them to the following purpose :

Here lie the bodies of Father Francis and Sister Constance. *They were lovely in their lives, and in their death they were not divided.*

*The Spectator*, No. 164.

Friday, September 7, 1711.

## LXXVI

*The Adulteration of English*

—*Si forte necesse est,  
Fingere cinctutis non exaudita Cethegis,  
Continget : dabiturque licentia sumpta pudenter.*

HOR.

I HAVE often wished, that as in our constitution there are several persons whose business it is to watch over our laws, our liberties and commerce, certain men might be set apart as superintendents of our language, to hinder any words of a foreign coin from passing among us ; and in particular to prohibit any French phrases from becoming current in this kingdom, when those of our own stamp are altogether as valuable. The present war has so adulterated our tongue with strange words, that it would be impossible for one of our great-grandfathers to know what his posterity have been doing, were he to read their exploits in a modern newspaper. Our warriors are very industrious in propagating the French language, at the same time that they are so gloriously successful in beating down their power. Our soldiers are men of strong heads for action, and perform such feats as they are not able to express. They want words in their own tongue to tell us what it is they achieve, and therefore send us over accounts of their performances in a jargon of phrases, which they learn among their conquered enemies. They ought however to be provided with

secretaries, and assisted by our foreign ministers, to tell their story for them in plain English, and to let us know in our mother-tongue what it is our brave countrymen are about. The French would indeed be in the right to publish the news of the present war in English phrases, and make their campaigns unintelligible. Their people might flatter themselves that things are not so bad as they really are, were they thus palliated with foreign terms, and thrown into shades and obscurity; but the English cannot be too clear in their narrative of those actions, which have raised their country to a higher pitch of glory than it ever yet arrived at, and which will be still the more admired the better they are explained.

For my part, by that time a siege is carried on two or three days, I am altogether lost and bewildered in it, and meet with so many inexplicable difficulties, that I scarce know what side has the better of it, till I am informed by the Tower guns that the place is surrendered. I do indeed make some allowances for this part of the war, fortifications having been foreign inventions, and upon that account abounding in foreign terms. Put when we have won battles which may be described in our own language, why are our papers filled with so many unintelligible exploits, and the French obliged to lend us a part of their tongue before we can know how they are conquered? They must be made accessory to their own disgrace, as the Britons were formerly so artificially wrought in the curtain of the Roman theatre, that they seemed to

draw it up in order to give the spectators an opportunity of seeing their own defeat celebrated upon the stage; for so Mr. Dryden has translated that verse in Virgil,

*Purpurea intexti tollant aulaea Britanni.*

Which interwoven Britons seem to raise,  
And show the triumph that their shame displays.

The histories of all our former wars are transmitted to us in our vernacular idiom, to use the phrase of a great modern critic. I do not find in any of our chronicles, that Edward the Third ever reconnoitred the enemy, though he often discovered the posture of the French, and as often vanquished them in battle. The Black Prince passed many a river without the help of pontoons, and filled a ditch with faggots as successfully as the generals of our time do it with fascines. Our commanders lose half their praise, and our people half their joy, by means of those hard words and dark expressions in which our newspapers do so much abound. I have seen many a prudent citizen, after having read every article, inquire of his next neighbour what news the mail had brought.

I remember in that remarkable year when our country was delivered from the greatest fears and apprehensions, and raised to the greatest height of gladness it had ever felt since it was a nation, I mean the year of Blenheim, I had the copy of a letter sent me out of the country, which was written from a young gentleman in the army to his father, a man of a good

estate and plain sense : as the letter was very modishly chequered with this modern military eloquence, I shall present my reader with a copy of it.

“SIR—Upon the junction of the French and Bavarian armies they took post behind a great morass which they thought impracticable. Our general the next day sent a party of horse to reconnoitre them from a little hauteur, at about a quarter of an hour’s distance from the army, who returned again to the camp unobserved through several defiles, in one of which they met with a party of French that had been marauding, and made them all prisoners at discretion. The day after a drum arrived at our camp, with a message which he would communicate to none but the general ; he was followed by a trumpet, who they say behaved himself very saucily, with a message from the Duke of Bavaria. The next morning our army, being divided into two corps, made a movement towards the enemy : you will hear in the public prints how we treated them, with the other circumstances of that glorious day. I had the good fortune to be in the regiment that pushed the *Gens d’Arms*. Several French battalions, who some say were a *Corps de Réserve*, made a show of resistance ; but it only proved a gasconade, for upon our preparing to fill up a little fosse, in order to attack them, they beat the Chamade, and sent us *Charte Blanche*. Their commandant, with a great many other general officers, and troops without number, are made prisoners of war,

and will I believe give you a visit in England, the cartel not being yet settled. Not questioning but these particulars will be very welcome to you, I congratulate you upon them, and am your most dutiful son," etc.

The father of the young gentleman upon the perusal of the letter found it contained great news, but could not guess what it was. He immediately communicated it to the curate of the parish, who upon the reading of it, being vexed to see anything he could not understand, fell into a kind of a passion, and told him that his son had sent him a letter that was neither fish, flesh, nor good red herring. "I wish," says he, "the captain may be *compos mentis*; he talks of a saucy trumpet, and a drum that carries messages; then who is this *Charte Blanche*? He must either banter us, or he is out of his senses." The father, who always looked upon the curate as a learned man, began to fret inwardly at his son's usage, and producing a letter which he had written to him about three posts afore, "You see here," says he, "when he writes for money he knows how to speak intelligibly enough; there is no man in England can express himself clearer, when he wants a new furniture for his horse." In short, the old man was so puzzled upon the point, that it might have fared ill with his son, had he not seen all the prints about three days after filled with the same terms of art, and that Charles only writ like other men.



## LXXVII

*The Legacy of Genius*

—*Quod nec Jovis ira, nec ignis,  
Nec poterit ferrum, nec edax abolere vetustas* —OVID.

ARISTOTLE tells us that the world is a copy or transcript of those ideas which are in the mind of the first Being, and that those ideas which are in the mind of man are a transcript of the world: to this we may add, that words are the transcript of those ideas which are in the mind of man, and that writing or printing are the transcript of words.

As the Supreme Being has expressed, and as it were printed his ideas in the creation, men express their ideas in books, which by this great invention of these latter ages may last as long as the sun and moon, and perish only in the general wreck of nature. Thus Cowley in his poem on the resurrection, mentioning the destruction of the universe, has those admirable lines :

Now all the wide extended sky,  
And all th' harmonious worlds on high,  
And Virgil's sacred work shall die.

There is no other method of fixing those thoughts which arise and disappear in the mind of man, and transmitting them to the last periods of time ; no other method of giving a permanency to our ideas, and preserving the knowledge of any particular person,

when his body is mixed with the common mass of matter, and his soul retired into the world of spirits. Books are the legacies that a great genius leaves to mankind, which are delivered down from generation to generation, as presents to the posterity of those who are yet unborn.

All other arts of perpetuating our ideas continue but a short time : statues can last but a few thousands of years, edifices fewer, and colours still fewer than edifices. Michael Angelo, Fontana, and Raphael, will hereafter be what Phidias, Vitruvius, and Apelles are at present ; the names of great statuarys, architects, and painters whose works are lost. The several arts are expressed in mouldering materials : nature sinks under them, and is not able to support the ideas which are impressed upon it.

The circumstance which gives authors an advantage above all these great masters, is this, that they can multiply their originals ; or rather can make copies of their works, to what number they please, which shall be as valuable as the originals themselves. This gives a great author something like a prospect of eternity, but at the same time deprives him of those other advantages which artists meet with. The artist finds greater returns in profit, as the author in fame. What an inestimable price would a Virgil or a Homer, a Cicero or an Aristotle bear, were their works like a statue, a building, or a picture, to be confined only in one place and made the property of a single person ?

If writings are thus durable, and may pass from

age to age throughout the whole course of time, how careful should an author be of committing anything to print that may corrupt posterity, and poison the minds of men with vice and error? Writers of great talents, who employ their parts in propagating immorality, and seasoning vicious sentiments with wit and humour, are to be looked upon as the pests of society and the enemies of mankind: they leave books behind them (as it is said of those who die in distempers which breed an ill-will towards their own species) to scatter infection and destroy their posterity. They act the counterparts of a Confucius or a Socrates; and seem to have been sent into the world to deprave human nature, and sink it into the condition of brutality.

I have seen some Roman Catholic authors, who tell us that vicious writers continue in purgatory so long as the influence of their writings continues upon posterity: for purgatory, say they, is nothing else but a cleansing us of our sins, which cannot be said to be done away, so long as they continue to operate and corrupt mankind. The vicious author, say they, sins after death, and so long as he continues to sin, so long must he expect to be punished. Though the Roman Catholic notion of purgatory be indeed very ridiculous, one cannot but think that if the soul after death has any knowledge of what passes in this world, that of an immoral writer would receive much more regret from the sense of corrupting, than satisfaction from the thought of pleasing, his surviving admirers.

• To take off from the severity of this speculation, I shall conclude this paper with a story of an atheistical author, who, at a time when he lay dangerously sick, and had desired the assistance of a neighbouring curate, confessed to him with great contrition, that nothing sat more heavy at his heart than the sense of his having seduced the age by his writings, and that their evil influence was likely to continue even after his death. The curate, upon further examination, finding the penitent in the utmost agonies of despair, and being himself a man of learning, told him that he hoped his case was not so desperate as he apprehended, since he found that he was so very sensible of his fault, and so sincerely repented of it. The penitent still urged the evil tendency of his book to subvert all religion, and the little ground of hope there could be for one whose writings would continue to do mischief when his body was laid in ashes. The curate, finding no other way to comfort him, told him that he did well in being afflicted for the evil design with which he published his book; but that he ought to be very thankful that there was no danger of its doing any hurt: that his cause was so very bad, and his arguments so weak, that he did not apprehend any ill effects of it: in short, that he might rest satisfied his book could do no more mischief after his death, than it had done whilst he was living. To which he added, for his further satisfaction, that he did not believe any besides his particular friends and acquaintance had ever been at the pains of reading it, or that

anybody after his death would ever inquire after it. The dying man had still so much of the frailty of an author in him, as to be cut to the heart with these consolations; and without answering the good man, asked his friends about him (with a peevishness that is natural to a sick person) where they had picked up such a blockhead? and whether they thought him a proper person to attend one in his condition? The curate, finding that the author did not expect to be dealt with as a real and sincere penitent, but as a penitent of importance, after a short admonition withdrew; not questioning but he should be again sent for if the sickness grew desperate. The author however recovered, and has since written two or three other tracts with the same spirit, and very luckily for his poor soul with the same success.

*The Spectator*, No. 166. Monday, September 10, 1711.

## LXXVIII

### *The Grinning Match*

—*Remove fera monstra, tuaeque  
Saxificos vultus, quaecunque ea, tolle Medusae.*—OVID, *Met.*

IN a late paper I mentioned the project of an ingenious author for the erecting of several handicraft prizes to be contended for by our British artisans, and the influence they might have towards the improvement of our several manufactures. I have since that been very much surprised by the following advertisement which

I find in the *Post-Boy* of the 11th instant, and again repeated in the *Post-Boy* of the 15th.

“On the 9th of October next will be run for upon Coleshill-Heath, in Warwickshire, a plate of 6 guineas value, 3 heats, by any horse, mare, or gelding that hath not won above the value of £5, the winning horse to be sold for £10, to carry 10 stone weight, if 14 hands high; if above or under, to carry or be allowed weight for inches, and to be entered Friday the 5th at the Swan in Coleshill, before six in the evening. Also a plate of less value to be run for by asses. The same day a gold ring to be grinn’d for by men.”

The first of these diversions, that is to be exhibited by the £10 race-horses, may probably have its use; but the two last, in which the asses and men are concerned, seem to me altogether extraordinary and unaccountable. Why they should keep running asses at Coleshill, or how making mouths turns to account in Warwickshire, more than in any other parts of England, I cannot comprehend. I have looked over all the Olympic games, and do not find anything in them like an ass-race, or a match at grinning. However it be, I am informed that several asses are now kept in body-clothes, and sweated every morning upon the heath, and that all the country-fellows within ten miles of the Swan grin an hour or two in their glasses every morning, in order to qualify themselves for the 9th of October. The prize, which is proposed to be

grinned for, has raised such an ambition among the common people of out-grinning one another, that many very discerning persons are afraid it should spoil most of the faces in the county ; and that a Warwickshire man will be known by his grin, as Roman Catholics imagine a Kentish man is by his tail. The gold ring which is made the prize of deformity, is just the reverse of the golden apple that was formerly made the prize of beauty, and should carry for its posy the old motto inverted,

*Detur tetriciori.*

Or, to accommodate it to the capacity of the combatants,

The frightfull'st grinner  
Be the winner.

In the meanwhile I would advise a Dutch painter to be present at this great controversy of faces, in order to make a collection of the most remarkable grins that shall be there exhibited.

I must not here omit an account which I lately received of one of these grinning matches from a gentleman, who, upon reading the above-mentioned advertisement, entertained a coffee-house with the following narrative. Upon the taking of Namur, amidst other public rejoicings, made on that occasion, there was a gold ring given by a Whig justice of the peace to be grinned for. The first competitor that entered the lists was a black swarthy Frenchman, who accidentally passed that way, and being a man naturally of a withered look and hard features,

promised himself good success. He was placed upon a table in the great point of view, and looking upon the company like Milton's Death,

Grinn'd horribly a ghastly smile.—

His muscles were so drawn together on each side of his face, that he showed twenty teeth at a grin, and put the country in some pain, lest a foreigner should carry away the honour of the day ; but upon a further trial they found he was master only of the merry grin.

The next that mounted the table was a malcontent in those days, and a great master in the whole art of grinning, but particularly excelled in the angry grin. He did his part so well, that he is said to have made half a dozen women miscarry ; but the justice being apprised by one who stood near him, that the fellow who grinned in his face was a Jacobite, and being unwilling that a disaffected person should win the gold ring, and be looked upon as the best grinner in the country, he ordered the oaths to be tendered unto him upon his quitting the table, which the grinner refusing, he was set aside as an unqualified person. There were several other grotesque figures that presented themselves, which it would be too tedious to describe. I must not however omit a ploughman, who lived in the farther part of the country, and being very lucky in a pair of long lanthorn-jaws, wrung his face into such a hideous grimace that every feature of it appeared under a different distortion. The whole company stood astonished at such a complicated grin, and were



ready to assign the prize to him, had it not been proved by one of his antagonists, that he had practised with verjuice for some days before, and had a crab found upon him at the very time of grinning ; upon which the best judges of grinning declared it as their opinion, that he was not to be looked upon as a fair grinner, and therefore ordered him to be set aside as a cheat.

The prize, it seems, fell at length upon a cobbler, Giles Gorgon by name, who produced several new grins of his own invention, having been used to cut faces for many years together over his last. At the very first grin he cast every human feature out of his countenance ; at the second he became the face of a spout, at the third a baboon, at the fourth the head of a bass-viol, and at the fifth a pair of nut-crackers. The whole assembly wondered at his accomplishments, and bestowed the ring on him unanimously ; but, what he esteemed more than all the rest, a country wench, whom he had wooed in vain for above five years before, was so charmed with his grins and the applauses which he received on all sides, that she married him the week following, and to this day wears the prize upon her finger, the cobbler having made use of it as his wedding-ring.

This paper might perhaps seem very impertinent, if it grew serious in the conclusion. I would nevertheless leave it to the consideration of those who are the patrons of this monstrous trial of skill, whether or not they are not guilty, in some measure, of an affront to their species, in treating after this manner the

"human face divine," and turning that part of us which has so great an image impressed upon it, into the image of a monkey ; whether the raising such silly competitions among the ignorant, proposing prizes for such useless accomplishments, filling the common people's heads with such senseless ambitions, and inspiring them with such absurd ideas of superiority and pre-eminence, has not in it something immoral as well as ridiculous.

*The Spectator*, No. 173.      Tuesday, September 18, 1711.

## LXXIX

*Gaiety and Gravity*

*Centuriae seniorum agitant expertia frugis :  
Celsi praeteriunt austeru poemata Rhamnes.  
Omne tulit punctum qui miscuit utile dulci,  
Lectorem delectando, pariterque monendo.*—HOR.

I MAY cast my readers under two general divisions, the Mercurial and the Saturnine. The first are the gay part of my disciples, who require speculations of wit and humour ; the others are those of a more solemn and sober turn, who find no pleasure but in papers of morality and sound sense. The former call everything that is serious stupid ; the latter look upon everything as impertinent that is ludicrous. Were I always grave, one half of my readers would fall off from me : were I always merry, I should lose the other. I make it therefore my endeavour to find out entertainments

Of both kinds, and by that means perhaps consult the good of both, more than I should do, did I always write to the particular taste of either. As they neither of them know what I proceed upon, the sprightly reader, who takes up my paper in order to be diverted, very often finds himself engaged unawares in a serious and profitable course of thinking; as on the contrary, the thoughtful man, who perhaps may hope to find something solid, and full of deep reflection, is very often insensibly betrayed into a fit of mirth. In a word, the reader sits down to my entertainment without knowing his bill of fare, and has therefore at least the pleasure of hoping there may be a dish to his palate.

I must confess, were I left to myself, I should rather aim at instructing than diverting; but if we will be useful to the world, we must take it as we find it. Authors of professed severity discourage the looser part of mankind from having anything to do with their writings. A man must have virtue in him, before he will enter upon the reading of a Seneca or an Epictetus. The very title of a moral treatise has something in it austere and shocking to the careless and inconsiderate.

For this reason several unthinking persons fall in my way, who would give no attention to lectures delivered with a religious seriousness or a philosophic gravity. They are insnared into sentiments of wisdom and virtue when they do not think of it; and if by that means they arrive only at such a degree of consideration as may dispose them to listen to more studied and elaborate discourses, I shall not think my

speculations useless. I might likewise observe, that the gloominess in which sometimes the minds of the best men are involved, very often stands in need of such little incitements to mirth and laughter, as are apt to disperse melancholy, and put our faculties in good humour. To which some will add, that the British climate, more than any other, makes entertainments of this nature in a manner necessary.

If what I have here said does not recommend, it will at least excuse, the variety of my speculations. I would not willingly laugh but in order to instruct, or if I sometimes fail in this point, when my mirth ceases to be instructive, it shall never cease to be innocent. A scrupulous conduct in this particular has, perhaps, more merit in it than the generality of readers imagine : did they know how many thoughts occur in a point of humour, which a discreet author in modesty suppresses ; how many strokes of raillery present themselves, which could not fail to please the ordinary taste of mankind, but are stifled in their birth by reason of some remote tendency which they carry in them to corrupt the minds of those who read them ; did they know how many glances of ill-nature are industriously avoided for fear of doing injury to the reputation of another, they would be apt to think kindly of those writers who endeavour to make themselves diverting without being immoral. One may apply to these authors that passage in Waller,

Poets lose half the praise they would have got,  
Were it but known what they discreetly blot.

As nothing is more easy than to be a wit with all the above-mentioned liberties, it requires some genius and invention to appear such without them.

What I have here said is not only in regard to the public, but with an eye to my particular correspondent who has sent me the following letter, which I have castrated in some places upon these considerations.

“SIR—Having lately seen your discourse upon a match of grinning, I cannot forbear giving you an account of a whistling match, which, with many others. I was entertained with about three years since at the Bath. The prize was a guinea, to be conferred upon the ablest whistler, that is, on him who could whistle clearest, and go through his tune without laughing, to which at the same time he was provoked by the antic postures of a Merry-Andrew, who was to stand upon the stage and play his tricks in the eye of the performer. There were three competitors for the guinea. The first was a ploughman of a very promising aspect ; his features were steady, and his muscles composed in so inflexible a stupidity, that upon his first appearance every one gave the guinea for lost. The pickled-herring however found the way to shake him ; for upon his whistling a country jig, this unlucky wag danced to it with such a variety of distortions and grimaces, that the countryman could not forbear smiling upon him, and by that means spoiled his whistle and lost the prize.

“The next that mounted the stage was an under-citizen of the Bath, a person remarkable among the

inferior people of that place for his great wisdom and his broad band. He contracted his mouth with much gravity, and, that he might dispose his mind to be more serious than ordinary, begun the tune of *The Children in the Wood*, and went through part of it with good success; when on a sudden the wit at his elbow, who had appeared wonderfully grave and attentive for some time, gave him a touch upon the left shoulder, and stared him in the face with so bewitching a grin, that the whistler relaxed his fibres into a kind of simper, and at length burst out into an open laugh. The third who entered the lists was a footman, who, in defiance of the Merry-Andrew and all his arts, whistled a Scotch tune and an Italian sonata, with so settled a countenance, that he bore away the prize, to the great admiration of some hundreds of persons, who, as well as myself, were present at this trial of skill. Now, sir, I humbly conceive, whatever you have determined of the grinners, the whistlers ought to be encouraged, not only as their art is practised without distortion, but as it improves country music, promotes gravity, and teaches ordinary people to keep their countenances, if they see anything ridiculous in their betters. . . . I am, sir, etc.

## POSTSCRIPT.

“After having dispatched these two important points of grinning and whistling, I hope you will oblige the world with some reflections upon yawning, as I have seen it practised on a Twelfth-night,

'among other Christmas gambols, at the house of a very worthy gentleman, who always entertains his tenants at that time of the year. They yawn for a Cheshire cheese, and begin about midnight, when the whole company is disposed to be drowsy. He that yawns widest, and at the same time so naturally as to produce the most yawns among the spectators, carries home the cheese. If you handle this subject as you ought, I question not but your paper will set half the kingdom a yawning, though I dare promise you it will never make anybody fall asleep."

*The Spectator*, No. 179. Tuesday, September 25, 1711.

END OF VOL. I







